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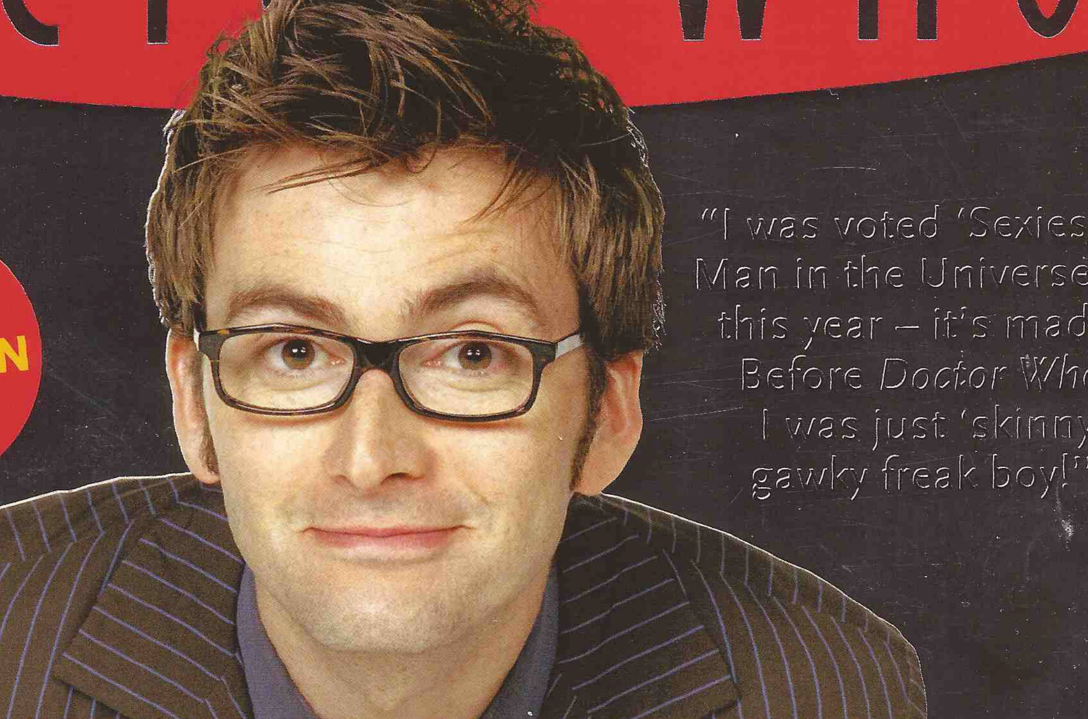
TORCHWOOD
All the latest Series 1 news!

McGANN RETURNS
The Eighth Doctor – back on BBC7!

MONSTER-MAKER
Neill Gorton shares his secrets!

DOCTOR · WHO

WIN A
CYBERMAN MASK!
AMAZING REPLICAS TO BE WON!



"I was voted 'Sexiest Man in the Universe' this year – it's mad! Before *Doctor Who* I was just 'skinny, gawky freak boy!'"

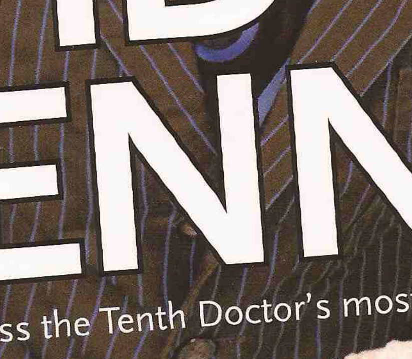
WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

DAVID TENNANT

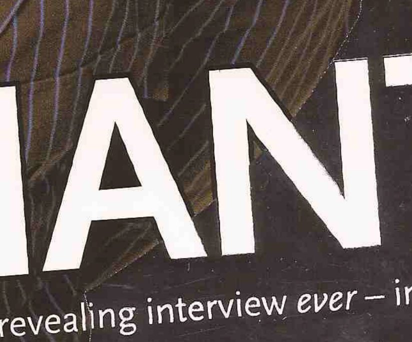
Don't miss the Tenth Doctor's most revealing interview *ever* – inside!

STAR INTERVIEWS!

COMIC STRIP ACTION!



CLASSIC ADVENTURES!



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AUDIO ADVENTURES

THE TARDIS ON ICE!

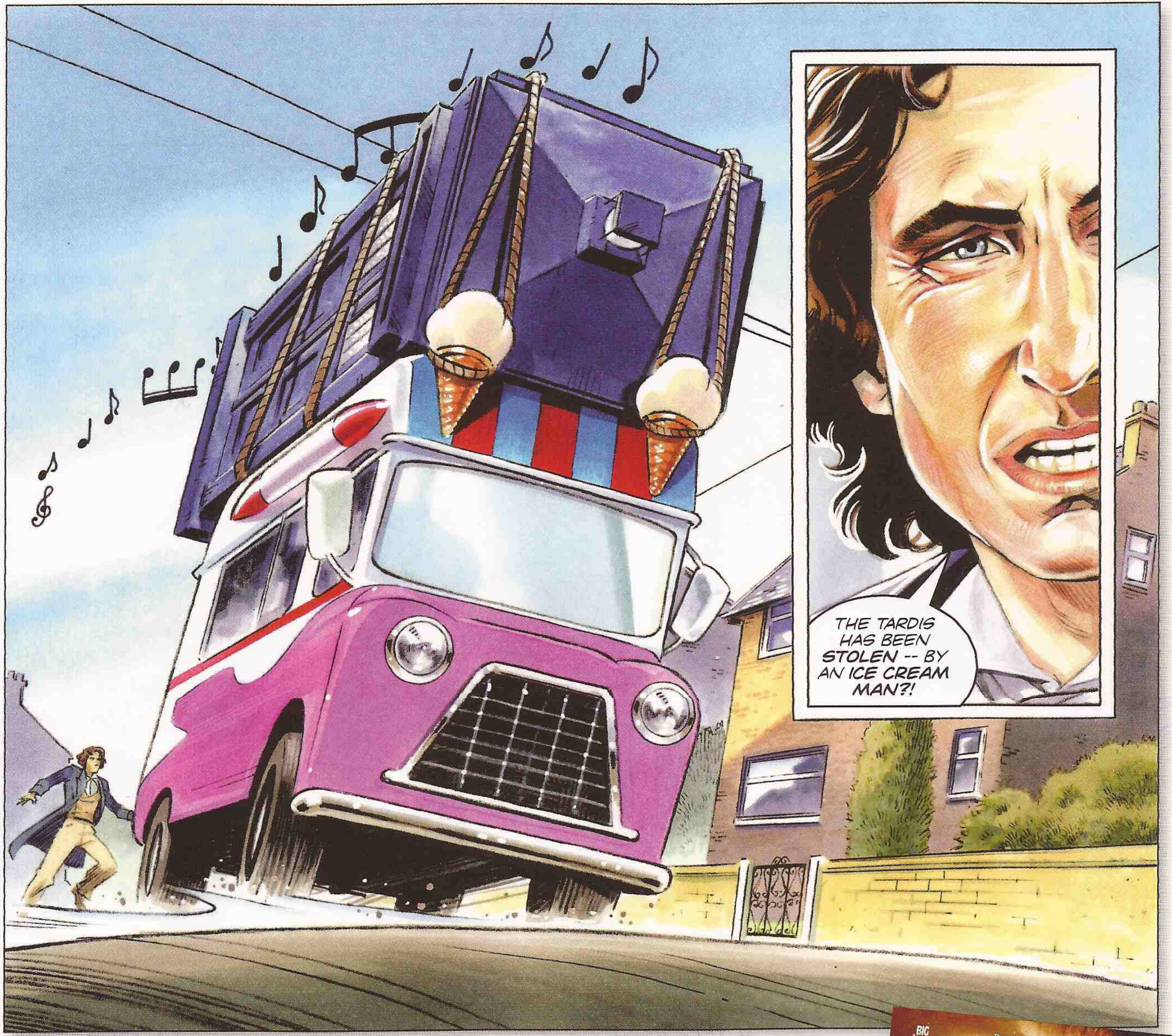
THE TARDIS HAS BEEN STOLEN -- BY AN ICE CREAM MAN?!

Illustration MARTIN GERAGHTY

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PULL TO OPEN

DOCTOR • WHO MAGAZINE

WELL LOOK AT US – ALL SHINY AND SILVER AND reflective! Hope you like the eye-catching cover, in honour of our in-depth interview with the main man himself, David Tennant, spread over 14 packed pages this issue. Perfect reading for those autumnal evenings in, or, if you angle the cover cleverly over a lamp, you can probably convince yourself it's still summer as you send beams of dappled light all over your lounge! Once you've finished reading David's tales of naked autographs, being Posh, and blubbing on the beach, your thoughts will probably turn to the other big event of this month – the launch of *Torchwood*. We've had a few letters from concerned readers, wondering when our coverage of *Doctor Who*'s first official spin-off show will break out of the pages of *Gallifrey Guardian* and into the magazine proper, so I thought I'd better explain a few things.

Firstly, we're **Doctor Who Magazine**, and our priority must always be *Doctor Who* – in all its many weird and wonderful forms. We only have limited space, and with two series-worth of new episodes, 40-odd years of classic stuff, and a third run currently before the cameras at BBC Wales, it's getting to be a squeeze as it is. Much as we're all excited about *Torchwood*, we could never cover it in the same detail as we do *Doctor Who*, and with it being a post-watershed series, we have to be careful with what we can print in a family magazine.

The main thing, though, is that we aren't licensed to be *Torchwood Magazine*. The new show has its own identity away from *Doctor Who*, and although **DWM** is given special access to the cast and crew who help create the Doctor's adventures, the same isn't automatically true of *Torchwood* – with its own stars, its own team, and, very soon, its own fanbase. This isn't to say we'll be giving it the cold shoulder – certainly not! – but we're still working out the best way for **DWM** to keep you up-to-date with Captain Jack and co, so keep an eye out over the next few issues...

Clay

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THANKS TO
John Ainsworth, Nicholas Briggs, Phil Collinson, Russell T Davies, Robert Dick, Barnaby Edwards, Julie Gardner, Neill Gorton, Sharon Gosling, James Goss, Ian Grutchfield, Claire Jones, Moray Laing, Lesley Land, Tim Leith, Jamie Lenman, Peter Mountstevens, Harriet Newby-Hill, Gareth Roberts, Edward Russell, Gary Russell, Louise Snell, David Tennant, Alex Thompson, BBC Drama Publicity, BBC Worldwide, Taylor Herring and bbc.co.uk.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING
orange 20 advertising sales
email: panini.adsales@o20.co.uk

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TALKING TENTH DOCTOR!

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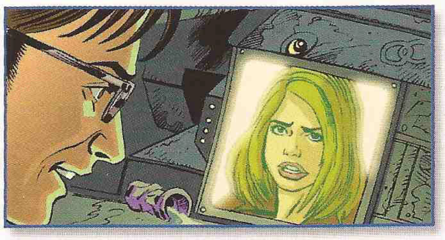

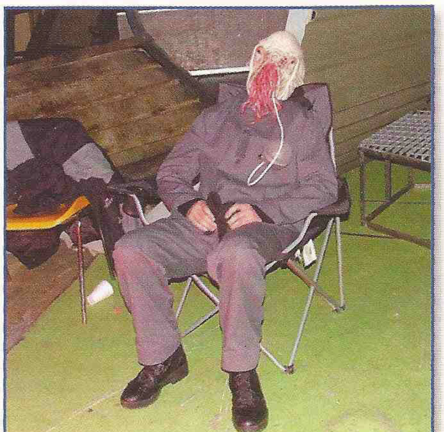

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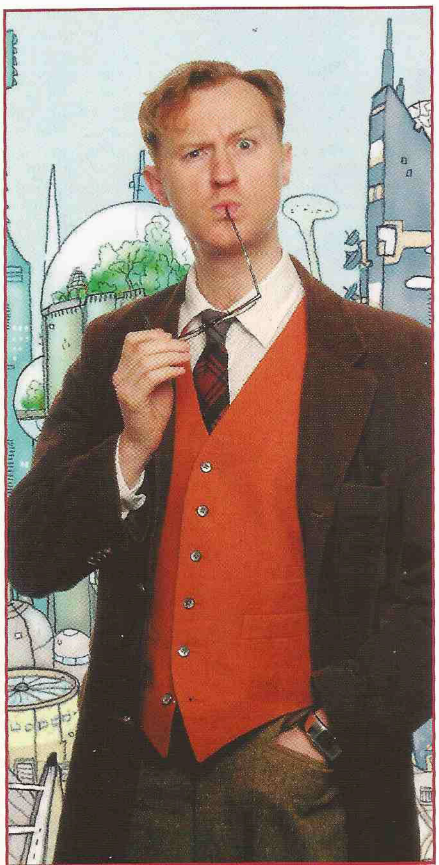
GALLIFREY GUARDIAN

ALL THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE WORLDS OF **DOCTOR WHO**...



“I'm absolutely thrilled to bits to appear in the best show in the world.”

More Series Three casting announced, including a familiar name...

GATISS GUESTS!

Mark Gatiss, writer of the *Doctor Who* stories *The Unquiet Dead* and *The Idiot's Lantern*, has been confirmed as a guest actor for one of next year's episodes. As an actor, Mark has made numerous appearances on television and in film, including *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)* (2000); *Spaced* (2001); *Dr Terrible's House of Horrible* (2001); *Surrealissimo* (2002); *Little Britain* (2003); *Bright Young Things* (2003); *Sex Lives of the Potato Men* (2004); *Nighty Night* (2004-2005); *Agatha Christie's Marple* (2004); *Funland* (2005); *The Quatermass Experiment* (2005); *The Wind in the Willows* (2006) and *Fear of Fanny* (2006). Most famously, of course, Mark is one third of the performing team that makes up *The League of Gentlemen*.

Mark tells **DWM**, “As you might expect, I'm absolutely thrilled to bits to appear in the best show in the world. According to the current schedule, the last day of shooting coincides with my 40th birthday and this is the best present I could've wished for!”

Also cast for guest roles in Block Three (Episodes 3 and 6) of the 2007 series are **Thelma Barlow** (Mavis in *Coronation Street*, *Dinnerladies*), **Ardal O'Hanlon** (*Father Ted*, *My Hero*), **Travis Oliver** (*Doctors*, *Footballers' Wives: Extra Time*), **Lenora Crichlow** (*Bella and the Boys*, *Sugar Rush*), **Jennifer Hennessy** (*The Office*, *Drop Dead Gorgeous*), **Bridget Turner** (*Z Cars*, *Heartbeat*), **Georgine Anderson** (*Jonathan Creek*, *Casualty*) and also **Lucy Davenport**, **Tom Edden**, **Natasha Williams**, **Gayle Telfer Stevens** and **Daisy Lewis**.

Block Three continues filming as this issue is published, under the guidance of director Richard Clarke, with James Strong's Block Four (Episodes 4 and 5) due to start before the end of the year. The series, therefore, is shaping up as follows:

Episode 1 by Russell T Davies, director Charles Palmer
Episode 2 by Gareth Roberts, director Charles Palmer
Episode 3 by Russell T Davies, director Richard Clarke
Episode 4 by Helen Raynor, director James Hawes
Episode 5 by Helen Raynor, director James Hawes
Episode 6 by Stephen Greenhorn, director Richard Clarke

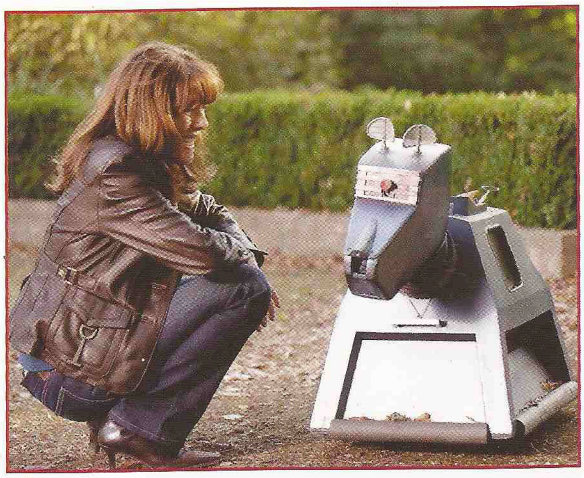
Russell T Davies is writing the final three episodes of the series, which include the return of Captain Jack Harkness, played by John Barrowman. Chris Chibnall and Paul Cornell are writing the remaining episodes.

More Series Three news next issue...

SARAH'S ADVENTURES

Production on *The Sarah Jane Adventures* is continuing, with casting announced for the 60-minute special written by Russell T Davies and Gareth Roberts. Joining Elisabeth Sladen, who returns as Sarah Jane, is Yasmin Paige, who plays Sarah's 13-year-old neighbour Maria. Together, Sarah Jane and Maria join forces to fight evil alien forces at work in Britain. In the special, the duo battle against the scheming Ms Wormwood, played by Samantha Bond (Miss Moneypenny in the *James Bond* films). K9, Sarah's faithful robot dog given to her by the Doctor, and who appeared with her in the recent *Doctor Who* episode *School Reunion*, makes a cameo appearance in the special, but is not expected to feature in the rest of the series.

Elisabeth said, “I left Sarah Jane but she never left me. I can't wait to return to Cardiff to find out what's going to happen to her next.” Filming on the special should have begun as this issue is published in October. Other actors confirmed to be starring in the special are Jamie Davis, Joseph Millson, Juliet Cowan, and Porsha Lawrence Mavour as Kelsey. The full series goes into production in spring 2007, and will consist of 10 half-hour episodes for CBBC. The producer of the series is Matthew Bouch and the series producer is Phil Collinson.



GARDNER UPGRADED

Julie Gardner, *Doctor Who*'s executive producer, has been promoted to the position of Head of Drama Commissioning at the BBC, although she will also keep her position as Head of Drama at BBC Wales for the time being, as well as remaining executive producer for *Doctor Who*, *Torchwood* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures*.

Julie replaces Jane Tranter, who said, “Julie is a creative powerhouse with an awesome track record for producing some of the most talked-about drama of recent years.”

Tranter, who commissioned the revival of *Doctor Who* in 2003, becomes the Controller of BBC Fiction.

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A revealing interview with the Tenth Doctor himself, **David Tennant**...

▶ p36

Meet the cast and crew of BBC7's new Eighth Doctor radio dramas...

▶ p66

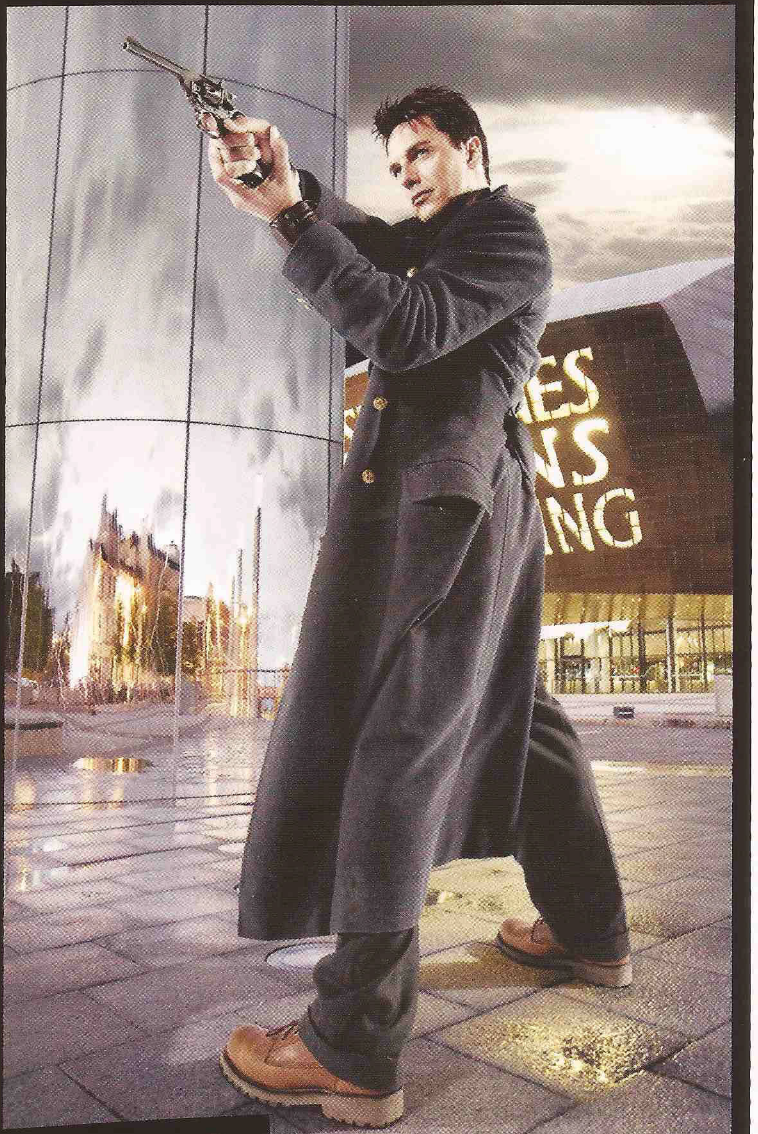
Gareth Roberts takes us through a year on *Doctor Who*...

TORCHWOOD IS HERE!

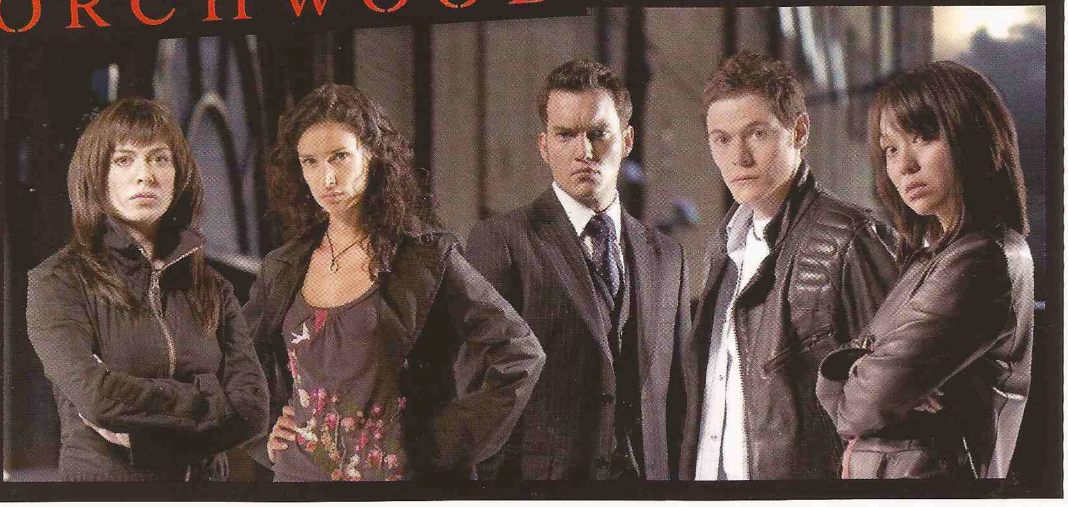
BBC Three's *Doctor Who* spin-off drama, *Torchwood*, which stars John Barrowman as Captain Jack Harkness and Eve Myles as Gwen Cooper, begins its 13-episode run on Sunday 22 October. The first episode will be simultaneously broadcast on BBC Three and BBC One, with the second episode following immediately on BBC Three only. Episode 3 will be screened on BBC Three on Sunday 29 October, with the rest of the series following in weekly instalments. The whole series will be shown on BBC One in the New Year. The *Torchwood* press launch was held at Cardiff Bay's St David's Hotel on Wednesday 18 October.

The *Torchwood* website launched on 12 October at *www.bbc.co.uk/torchwood* where you can go on an exploration of Torchwood with 'alien autopsies'; watch behind-the-scenes footage of how to make an alien; take an interactive tour of Torchwood's Hub headquarters; and watch exclusive interviews with cast, crew and writers and an online look at how the programme is made. There's also the chance to catch up with stories from past episodes after they're screened and view a preview to the following programme. There will also be a 'fictional' website at *www.torchwood.org.uk* similar to those produced for *Doctor Who* earlier in the year.

The first six episodes of *Torchwood* have been confirmed as *Everything Changes* (formerly *Flotsam and Jetsam*) by Russell T Davies; *Day One* (formerly *New Girl*) by Chris Chibnall; *Ghost Machine* by Helen Raynor; *The Trouble With Lisa* (working title) by Chris Chibnall; *Small Worlds* by PJ Hammond; and *Countrycide* by Chris Chibnall.



TORCHWOOD



NEWS BITES

BECOME AN OOD!

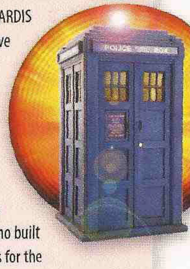
Neill Gorton, *Doctor Who's* make-up and prosthetics producer, and his company Millenium FX, have been responsible for quite a few gruesome creations over the past couple of years, and now you can get your hands on some of their handywork.

Millennium FX has been licenced by the BBC to produce replica masks for the public to buy, produced from the original moulds used to create the creatures for the show. Each mask will be branded to 'on-set' standard , and each will be numbered and verified to confirm that they are the real thing.

Already available are Cyberman, Cyber Leader and Cyber Controller helmets (as seen in episodes such as *Rise of the Cybermen* and *The Age of Steel*), Clockwork droid masks, both male and female versions (from *The Girl in the Fireplace*). Next up will be Ood masks from the episodes *The Impossible Planet* and *The Satan Pit*.

More information and details of prices can be found at *www.mfxreplicas.com* – and make sure you read our interview with Neill on page 48, with a chance to win your very own Cyberman helmet...

TARDIS STORAGE!

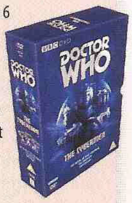


Two new TARDIS models have recently been produced by Bristol-based company Cod Steaks Models, who built the models for the movie *Curse of the Were-Rabbit*. One is a collectors' model, while the other doubles as a CD and DVD storage unit. The models, based on the police box prop used in *Doctor Who* between 1980 and 1989 are built to a scale of 1:5, standing 55cm tall. These collectors' items are incredibly detailed, and cast in durable resin. The storage cabinet version has two adjustable shelves, and can store 28 DVDs or 60 CDs. The collectors' model retails at £250 and the storage version at £350, and are available by ▶

◄ mail order only. More details can be found at *relative.dimension@blueyonder.co.uk*.

AMAZON EXCLUSIVES

Two *Doctor Who* DVD box sets are to be released exclusively for online retailer Amazon. The first packages together six previously released DVDs starring the Third Doctor, Jon Pertwee. The stories are *Spearhead from Space*, *Inferno*, *The Claws of Axos*, *The Three Doctors*, *Carnival of Monsters* and *The Green Death*. The second set is a Cybermen collection, comprising *The Tomb of the Cybermen*, *The Invasion* and *Earthshock*. Both of these sets will be available from 6 November, the same day as the regular release of *The Invasion*. A Dalek-themed set is likely to follow in January.



US UPDATE

The Complete Second Series DVD box set will be released in the US on 16 January, with the same content and cover packaging as the UK version. The series is currently airing on Sci-Fi in the US and on CBS in Canada.

NEW ADVENTURES

Issue 14 of *Doctor Who Adventures*, the magazine for younger *Doctor Who* fans, is on sale now – and it's packed with Daleks. There's a bonus Dalek wall chart; a feature on what it's like to travel with the Doctor; a brand new comic strip; a feature on the Sisters of Plenitude; the Face of Boe is spotlighted in the A-Z of Monsters; plus a quiz to find out which *Doctor Who* monster you're most like! There's also a free chunky pen, and a set of the Doctor's sticky notes.

Issue 15 goes on sale from Tuesday 17 October, with a Fact File on the Slitheen; the Graske appears in the Monster A-Z; *Fear Her* features in the Adventure Guide; a feature on the Moxx of Balhoon; an Abzorbaloff mask; and some free slimy eyes and claws – perfect for Hallowe'en scares!

Doctor Who Adventures should be in all good newsagents priced £1.99 per issue. Other *Doctor Who* magazines are also available.

TV AWARDS TRIUMPH!

Doctor Who added to its already bulging trophy cabinet on Tuesday 5 September, with three victories at the *TV Quick/TV Choice* awards. David Tennant was named Best Actor of 2006; Billie Piper picked up the award for Best Actress of 2006; and *Doctor Who* itself was named the Best-Loved Drama. Last year Christopher Eccleston picked up the Best Actor award for *Doctor Who*, but this was the single victory for the programme, which lost out in the Drama category to *Desperate Housewives*.

Doctor Who's producer Phil Collinson tells **DWM**, "These are the first awards *Doctor Who* has received for Series Two, so we're over the moon that the programme seems to be just as popular – if not more so! – as it was last year. Congratulations to David and Billie for their individual victories, and to everyone on the *Doctor Who* team!"

The following evening Billie Piper was brandishing the silverware once again, winning the Woman of the Year trophy at the annual *GQ* awards, pictured left with fellow award-winner James Nesbitt, who she co-starred with in the BBC's 2002 adaptation of *The Miller's Tale*.

INSIDE THE MASTER'S BOX!

EXTRA FEATURES CONFIRMED FOR JANUARY'S **DOCTOR WHO** TRIPLE-DVD BOX SET

DVD company 2|entertain has confirmed the extra features for January's box set, featuring the stories *The Keeper of Traken*, *Logopolis* and *Castrovalva*, which introduced Anthony Ainley as the Master in 1981/82.

The Keeper of Traken disc features a commentary on all four episodes from writer Johnny Byrne and actors Matthew Waterhouse (Adric), Sarah Sutton (Nyssa) and Anthony Ainley (recorded shortly before Ainley's death in 2004). This disc also features the 30-minute documentary *Being Nice to Each Other* on the making of the story, featuring Sutton, Sheila Ruskin (Kassia), Geoffrey Beevers (the Master), director John Black, script editor Christopher H Bidmead, and Johnny Byrne. A second feature, *The Return of the Master* (9 minutes), interviews Beevers, Bidmead and Black about how they brought back the Doctor's nemesis. Also included is Sarah Sutton's 1981 appearance on *Swap Shop*.

The *Logopolis* disc includes a commentary from Tom Baker (the Doctor), Janet Fielding (Tegan) and Bidmead. A 50-minute documentary *A New Body At Last* examines the transition between Tom Baker and Peter Davison, featuring Baker, Davison, Waterhouse, Sutton, Adrian Gibbs (the Watcher), Bidmead and directors Peter Moffatt and John Black. Also on the disc are two interviews from *Nationwide*, one with Baker and the other Davison; a Davison interview from *Pebble Mill at One*; and various news items on Baker's departure, Davison's casting, and Baker's wedding to Lalla Ward.

The *Castrovalva* disc features a commentary from Davison, Fielding, Bidmead and director Fiona Cumming; *Being Doctor Who* (a new Davison interview, 13 minutes); *Directing Castrovalva* (a Fiona Cumming interview, 11 minutes); *The Crowded TARDIS*, a 13-minute featurette looking at how the TARDIS crew had grown; archive interviews with Davison from both *Blue Peter* and *Swap Shop*; two deleted scenes from *Castrovalva*; and a *Theme Music Video* – a new remix of Peter Howell's version of the theme, with the option to listen in stereo or Dolby Digital 5.1 surround.

All three discs also include original trailers and continuity announcements; isolated music scores from composers Roger Limb and Paddy Kingsland; PDFs of the 1982 *Doctor Who Annual*, *Radio Times* listings, and BBC Enterprises sales literature; a photo gallery; and production notes subtitles.

THE KEEPER OF TRAKEN

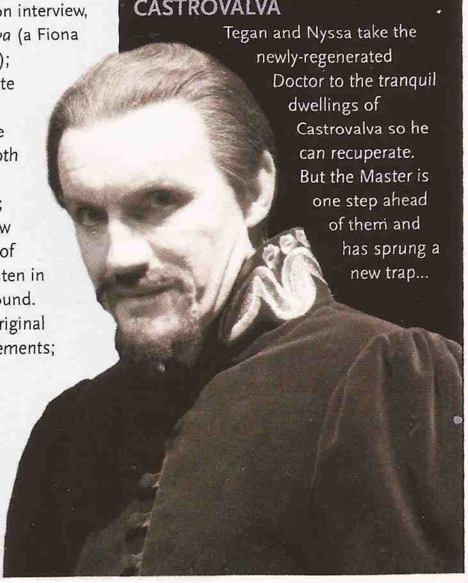
The Doctor and his companion Adric visit the planet Traken, where they meet a new friend Nyssa. But they soon become ensnared in a trap laid by an old enemy...

LOGOPOLIS

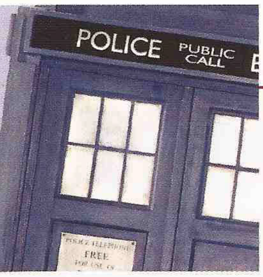
Trying to mend the TARDIS' chameleon circuit, the Doctor takes Adric and a young air hostess called Tegan to the planet Logopolis. But the Master has stowed away on board and his evil plan could mean the end of the universe...

CASTROVALVA

Tegan and Nyssa take the newly-regenerated Doctor to the tranquil dwellings of Castrovalva so he can recuperate. But the Master is one step ahead of them and has sprung a new trap...



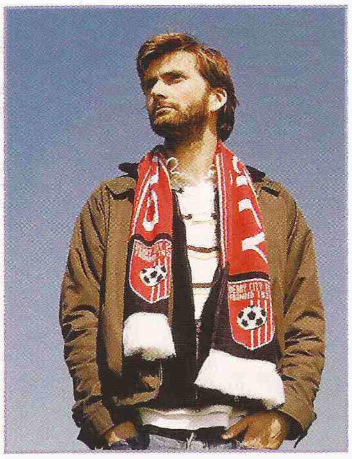
BEYOND THE TARDIS



DOMINIC MAY tells us what **Doctor Who**'s movers and shakers have been up to away from the series...

DOCTOR COOL

A recent pizza company survey of children aged 11 and 12 confirmed **David Tennant** is the coolest person in the UK. His edition of BBC One's *Who Do You Think You Are?* was broadcast on 27 September. The BFI has expanded its download archive to include programming featuring both Tennant and **Christopher Eccleston**. Tennant was briefly reunited with **Billie Piper** at the V Festival at Chelmsford's Hyland's Park on 20 August, who is due to guest on the current series of *Friday Night with Jonathan Ross*. She has begun filming in North Yorkshire as Fanny Price for ITV1's *Mansfield Park*, having previously reunited with *New Earth*'s **Adjoa Andoh** for BBC One's *The Shadow of the North.*



TATE'S GALLERY

How very dare you miss *The Runaway Bride*'s **Catherine Tate**'s third series of *The Catherine Tate Show* due on BBC Two, including new skit *Life at Ma's*. She was listed Number 9 in *Radio Times*' Queens of Comedy survey.

JB FORSAKES MUSICALS

John Barrowman's *Doctor Who*-related commitments has resulted in his declining roles in three West End musicals: *The Sound of Music*, *Wicked* and *Spamalot*. He presents hour-long special *Keys to the Castle* for US cable network HGTV (various broadcast scheduled into November), filmed in the spring when he visited UK stately homes and castles including former *Doctor Who* exhibition abode Longleat House. He performed before Prince Charles at a private dinner at Highgrove on behalf of The Prince's Foundation on 24 June.

KEEP UP WITH THE JONES'S

Adjoa Andoh, whose father hails from Ghana, marched to the Treasury on 14 September to pressure the UK government to cut funding to the World Bank and IMF because they prevent some developing countries from subsidising their farmers or protecting their own markets. **Gugu Mbatha-Raw** will be seen in British revenge thriller *Straightheads* starring Gillian Anderson and Danny Dyer.

MARK GETS RATTY

Mark Gatiss is Rat in a lavish BBC One version of *The Wind in the Willows* opposite *The Long Game*'s **Anna Maxwell Martin** (currently Sally Bowles in *Cabaret* at London's Lyric Theatre), plus Johnnie in BBC Three's *Fear of Fanny. The League of Gentlemen are Behind You* DVD is released on 20 November. Filming commenced in September on **Steven Moffat**'s *Jekyll* with a stellar cast including James Nesbitt, Gina Bellman, Dennis Lawson, Michelle Ryan and Meera Syal. The producers say "the series is a remarkable conspiracy thriller – more *Spooks* than Robert Louis Stevenson." **Paul Cornell** has scripted two episodes of BBC One's *The Legend of Robin Hood*, the first on 21 October. He also written a six-issue limited comic series titled *Wisdom* as well as pitching a series of his own to the BBC.

TOM ON SATURDAYS

Weekly animation *The Secret Show* with **Tom Baker** as the voice of Robert Baron and *Death Comes to Time*'s **Stephen Fry** as The Luckiest Man in the World is part of BBC Two's Saturday morning show *TMi*. Tom features on the *Little Britain Live* DVD issued on 13 November and the *Little Britain Abroad* Christmas specials, in which **Peter Kay** guests. **Peter Davison** was recently seen as George Hartley in ITV1's *The Complete Guide to Parenting* and appears opposite his daughter Georgia Moffett in BBC Two's *Fear, Stress and Anger.*

THEATRE NEWS

Sylvester McCoy's tour in *Me and My Girl* continues from 2 October taking in Malvern (01684 892277), Woking (01483 545900), Wolverhampton (01902 429212), Nottingham (01159 895555) and Edinburgh (0131 529 6000). From the same date *Arsenic and Old Lace* featuring **Louise Jameson** moves on to Lincoln (01522 534570), Aberdeen (01224 641122), Wimbledon (0870 060 6646) and Cambridge (01223 503333). More to follow. Nyder actor **Peter Miles** is performing *An Evening With Peter Miles* on Saturday 11 November at the Studio Theatre, Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. Tickets are £10 from the box office (0161 9075555).

COMPANION CORNER

Anneke Wills was the subject of fascinating *Daily Mail* article *The Intriguing Story of Dr Who's Sidekick* by Barbara Davies on 25 July (*www.dailymail.co.uk* and search for Anneke Wills). In July **Katy Manning** won Best Supporting Actress for Miss Harrington in independent short film *When Darkness Falls* at MUFF77 (Melbourne's Underground Film Festival). Former Steve Irwin producer **Mark Strickson** is NHNZ series producer of new 12-part wildlife series *Up Close and Dangerous* airing on Animal Planet in the US from 7 October.

DRACULA DRAWS DW BLOOD

Love & Monsters' **Marc Warren** and *The Girl in the Fireplace*'s **Sophia Myles** head the cast with **Julie Gardner** an executive producers on BBC One's *Dracula* for Christmas broadcast.

QUICKIES

Christopher Eccleston narrated Channel 4 breast cancer documentary *Bosom Buddies* on 20 July. Webcast Doctor **Richard E Grant** performs in the 2006 *Secret Policeman's Ball* at the Royal Albert Hall on 14 October. *Fear Her* writer **Matthew Graham**'s *Life on Mars* took the Continuing Series prize at the Banff World Television Festival and is currently showing on Bravo and BBC America. The BBC is reportedly looking to make a new six-part version of **Terry Nation**'s 1970s apocalypse drama *Survivors*. *The Mark of the Rani*'s **Sarah Hellings** directed *Midsomer Murders* on 3 September.

IN THE SHOPS

Your guide to all the upcoming *Doctor Who* DVDs, CDs, books and magazines...

OCTOBER

MONDAY 2

CD Doctor Who: Monsters on Earth [Third and Fifth Doctors] *BBC Audio £45.00*

MONDAY 9

DVD Doctor Who: The Sontaran Experiment by Bob Baker and Dave Martin [Fourth Doctor, Sarah Jane and Harry] *2|entertain £12.99*

TUESDAY 17

Mag Doctor Who Adventures #15 *BBC Magazines £1.99*

TUESDAY 31

Mag Doctor Who Adventures #16 *BBC Magazines £1.99*

ALSO THIS MONTH

Book Doctor Who: The Inside Story by Gary Russell *BBC Books £tba*

CD Doctor Who: Memory Lane by Eddie Robson [Eighth Doctor] *Big Finish £14.99*

CD I, Davros Part 2: Purity by James Parsons and Andrew Stirling *Big Finish £10.99*

NOVEMBER

MONDAY 6

DVD Doctor Who: The Invasion by Derrick Sherwin [Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe] *2|entertain £19.99*

CD Doctor Who Reconstructed: The Highlanders [Second Doctor, Ben, Polly and Jamie] *BBC Audio £tba*

THURSDAY 9

DWM Issue 376 *Panini £3.99*

THURSDAY 16

DWM Special: In Their Own Words – Volume 2 *Panini £5.99*

MONDAY 20

DVD Doctor Who: The Complete Second Series by Russell T Davies *et al* [Tenth Doctor, Rose, Mickey and Jackie] *2|entertain £69.99*

ALSO THIS MONTH

CD Doctor Who: No Man's Land by Martin Day [Seventh Doctor] *Big Finish £14.99*

DOCTOR WHO
No Man's Land

WIN DVDS!

There are three new volumes of *Doctor Who* adventures just released on DVD, and we have FREE copies for you to win...

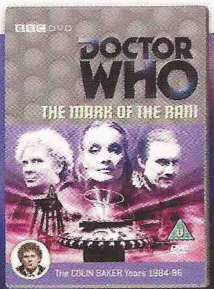
In Volume 2.5 of the most recent series, the Doctor and Rose meet a young girl with a scary talent in *Fear Her*, and face all-out war between the Daleks and the Cybermen in *Army of Ghosts* and *Doomsday*. It's out now priced £15.99 but you can win one of five copies by telling us:

What was the name of the group of Daleks that emerged from the void sphere?

a) The Cult of Skaro
b) The Pussycat Dolls
c) The Scissor Sisters

Send your answers on the back of a postcard or stuck-down envelope to the editorial address on page 10 marked "This is not war, this is pest control!"

BBC DVD
DOCTOR·WHO
Series 2 Volume 5 Fear Her Army Of Ghosts Doomsday



Also on sale now is the 1985 story *The Mark of the Rani*, priced £19.99, and we've got five copies to give away. But first tell us the answer to this easy question:

Which two well-known Doctor Who super villains join forces against the Doctor in, um, The Mark of the Rani?

a) Tlotoxl and Salamander
b) Kroagnon and Gavrok
c) The Master and the Rani

When you think you've worked out the answer, write it on the back of a postcard or envelope, and send it to the usual **DWM** address marked "Fortuitous would be a more apposite epithet."

Finally, 1975's *The Sontaran Experiment* is also on sale now, priced £12.99. Once again we've got five copies to give away.

What is the shape of Styre's spherical spaceship?

a) A sphere
b) A rocket
c) A trombone

BBC DVD
DOCTOR WHO
THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT
The TOM BAKER Years 1974-81

Just send the answer to **DWM** on the back of a postcard or stuck-down envelope, marked "Not today, thank you."

The closing date for all three competitions is 8 November 2006, so get your skates on. Good luck!

PETER LING

It's not everyone that creates a TV series that runs for over two decades. But Peter Ling (along with his co-writer Hazel Adair) did just this in 1964, when they devised the soap opera *Crossroads*. Much derided in later years for having more wobbly sets than even *Doctor Who* was fabled for, it was nevertheless a popular and much-loved programme, and source of much of Victoria Wood's inspiration for her spoof *Acorn Antiques* many years later.

It was while working on storylines for *Crossroads* in the late 1960's, that Peter Ling met two other writers who worked on the series – Derrick Sherwin and Terrance Dicks. All three of them lived in London, but regularly commuted by train together to Birmingham (where *Crossroads* was made). It was during one of these train journeys – so popular myth has it – that Peter Ling began speculating with Sherwin and Dicks about what happened to fictional characters once the book, or play, or film that they featured in was finished. Surely these characters would go on to have a life of their own, somewhere...?

Derrick Sherwin defected to the BBC in 1967, to join the production team of *Doctor Who* as script editor, shortly followed by Terrance Dicks. It wasn't long before Sherwin contacted the third member of the *Crossroads* commuter club, on the lookout for original story ideas for the series. Peter Ling initially took some persuading to contribute, fearing that his style of writing wasn't particularly suited to the genre of science-fiction, but he eventually hit on the idea of writing a story around his concept of fictional characters having a life of their own.

His story would become *The Mind Robber*, a five-part adventure from Patrick Troughton's final series in *Doctor Who*. Set in the 'Land of Fiction', it featured the TARDIS crew encountering a whole host of mythical and literary characters, such as Rapunzel, Gulliver, the Medusa and the Minotaur. As a story, it's an enchanting and magical diversion from the more solid science-fiction outings of the day, while as a production, it's a marvel to see how effortlessly it coped with the many behind-the-scenes problems it had to face – the late addition of an extra episode (scripted by Sherwin), the loss of Frazer Hines for an episode due to chicken pox, and some tight budgetary constraints that resulted in a lack of new sets for the opening instalment, and the re-use of some robot costumes from *Out of the Unknown*.

Peter Ling's writing career covered many of the seminal programmes of the 1950s and 60s, such as *Whirlygig*, *Z Cars* and *The Avengers*, and aside from *Crossroads*, he and Hazel Adair also created the popular BBC drama *Compact* (a series that *Doctor Who* producer John Nathan-Turner was a great fan of, so much so that he actively worked on a 1980s revival of the programme called *Impact*, which never got past the initial ideas stage).

In later years, Peter Ling would move away from writing for television, and concentrate more on writing books. In 1986, he was asked to write a novelisation of *The Mind Robber* for the Target range of *Doctor Who* books. His novel retells the story in something of a unique style for the range, and his literary inspirations from the world of classical children's fiction populate and inform his writing.

In 2004, I was given the task of making a documentary about *The Mind Robber* for inclusion on the DVD release of the story (something I shamelessly had lobbied for, as I've always had a soft spot for this particular adventure). I was delighted when Peter Ling agreed to contribute to the programme, and joined David Maloney, Wendy Padbury and Evan Hercules amongst others at BBC TV Centre one sunny August day. His memories of the story in question, and the circumstances around its production were all a bit dim and distant, but he seemed genuinely pleased that something he wrote so long ago was still being discussed and enjoyed so long after it was made. He saw his story in terms of the tales and fictions that had drawn and interested in him when he was younger – the works of Jonathan Swift, E Nesbit and Frank Richards. His *Doctor Who* story wasn't a science-fiction epic, but a children's fantasy. "When you write for children," he told me at one point, "you want them to enjoy it and smile, as much as you want them to be excited by it." A sentiment that I'm sure today's crop of *Doctor Who* writers would readily agree with.

RICHARD MOLESWORTH

A personal tribute by ex-*Doctor Who* producer Derrick Sherwin...

Many years ago in my early writing career, Peter Ling, Terrance Dicks and I were recruited as a team to write the *Crossroads* TV soap opera. I well remember my first meeting with Peter and Terrance; it was on a train travelling up to Birmingham for our first story conference. These monthly meetings were to sort out the storylines, and to appoint them to each of the three of us. We subsequently had a very close working relationship, passing on the content of each of our scripts, working as a team. Our journeys to Birmingham were hilarious affairs, starting with breakfast in the train's diner of superb kippers, toast and several large gin and tonics. Very inspiring!

When, afterwards I joined the BBC as Story Editor of *Doctor Who*, I recruited Terry Dicks as assistant editor, and I asked Peter if he would like to contribute a story for *Doctor Who*. He was reluctant, for he didn't feel that this was his cup of tea. However, I persisted and he eventually came up with one of the best ideas I ever encountered for *Doctor Who – The Mind Robber*! We worked together very closely on it, and I eventually contributed the first introductory script to the strand, because the previous story had fallen short and we had no money to pay anyone else for the 'link'. I certainly didn't want to 'pad' Peter's scripts, so I wrote a piece which had no sets, except the TARDIS, no guest actors, no monsters (except some clapped-out robots) – no money! Peter was delighted and the production of *The Mind Robber* was successfully directed by David Maloney. I believe it also achieved some awards somewhere.

My memories of Peter are of a very professional, gentle man who had a great love of literature and of children – hence *The Mind Robber*. He will be remembered with great affection and respect.

BIG FINISH ROUND-UP

Recording for Big Finish's January release, *Circular Time*, is now complete. This atypical adventure finds Peter Davison's Fifth Doctor and Sarah Sutton's Nyssa following the year's seasons through four individual stories and features a clutch of British character actors. David Warner, fresh from starring as Steel in Big Finish's *Sapphire and Steel* audio series, appears as an apopletic Isaac Newton, whilst Hugh Fraser (*Sharpe*) features as renegade Time Lord Zero,in a story that also features Lois Baxter, (Lamia in 1978's *The Androids of Tara*). John Benfield (*Prime Suspect*) puts in a turn as a former Lancashire cricketer as the Doctor takes a few wickets and Nyssa falls in love.

Elsewhere in the Big Finish Universe, 2006's special subscriber disc *Return of the Daleks* also went before the microphone, ready to accompany the regular December release, *Year of the Pig*. The exclusive story revisits the characters of Nick Briggs' acclaimed series *Dalek Empire*, with Sarah Mowat and Gareth Thomas reprising their roles as Susan Mendes and Kalendorf as the trio battle to prevent a repeat of the Dalek invasion.

Finally, there comes an announcement of a new mini-series entitled *The Companion Chronicles*. Featuring Lalla Ward (Romana), Wendy Padbury (Zoe Herriot), Caroline John (Liz Shaw) and Maureen O'Brien (Vicki), each story in the four-strong series will explore a classic-Doctor adventure through the eyes of the Doctor's companion. With the titles *Fear of the Daleks*, *Blue Tooth*, *Frostfire* (with guest Paul Darrow) and *Psychomorph* (with guest Marcia Ashton), *The Companion Chronicles* will explore what travelling with the Doctor is truly like through the eyes of those that know best...

SPEAK EASY!

The commentaries for next month's *Complete Second Series* DVD set have been announced. Five of the episodes (*The Christmas Invasion, The Girl in the Fireplace, The Age of Steel, The Impossible Planet* and *Doomsday*) feature 'in-vision' commentaries, while standard audio commentaries are on the other nine episodes. The full run-down of contributors is as follows:

The Christmas Invasion Writer/executive producer Russell T Davies, executive producer Julie Gardner and producer Phil Collinson

New Earth Director James Hawes, Julie Gardner and visual effects producer Will Cohen

Tooth and Claw Russell T Davies, visual effects producer Dave Houghton and production designer Edward Thomas

School Reunion Actor David Tennant (the Doctor), writer Toby Whithouse and Julie Gardner

The Girl in the Fireplace Phil Collinson and actors David Tennant and Sophia Myles (Reinette)

Rise of the Cybermen Actors Noel Clarke (Mickey), Camille Coudri (Jackie) and Andrew Hayden-Smith (Jake)

The Age of Steel Director Graeme Harper and actors Nicholas Briggs (voice of the Cybermen) and Paul Kasey (Cyber Controller)

The Idiot's Lantern David Tennant, Edward Thomas and special effects/prosthetics producer Charlie Bluett

The Impossible Planet David Tennant, Will Cohen and actor Shaun Parkes (Zachary)

The Satan Pit Director James Strong, editor Mike Jones and actor Ronny Jhutti (Danny)

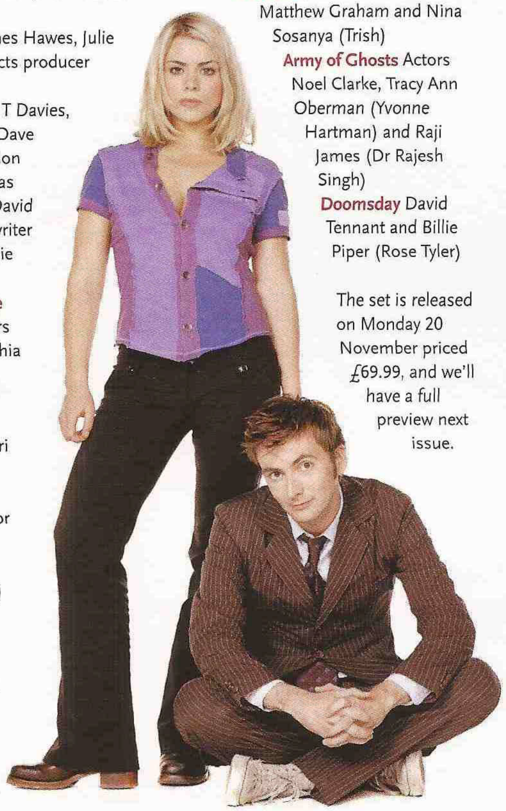
Love & Monsters Director Dan Zeff, Camille Coduri and Julie Gardner

Fear Her Julie Gardner, writer Matthew Graham and Nina Sosanya (Trish)

Army of Ghosts Actors Noel Clarke, Tracy Ann Oberman (Yvonne Hartman) and Raji James (Dr Rajesh Singh)

Doomsday David Tennant and Billie Piper (Rose Tyler)

The set is released on Monday 20 November priced £69.99, and we'll have a full preview next issue.



JUSTIN RICHARDS

BBC BOOKS' RANGE EDITOR TALKS TO DWM...

In the shops now are the three latest *Doctor Who* novels from BBC Books; *The Art of Destruction* by Stephen Cole, *The Price of Paradise* by Colin Brake and *The Nightmare of Black Island* by Mike Tucker. **DWM** spoke to the range editor **Justin Richards** to ask about the new novels, and plans for the future...

This is the first time with these 'new series' books that you haven't written one of them yourself. Why is that?

Justin Richards It's nice to have a rest! It's always our intention to broaden the list of authors we use. Mike Tucker is a brilliant author, and of course has connections with the TV production so there is no problem with getting him the background narrative information he needs – he sees all that anyway for his model work. So logistically it made sense to involve him, but I would have invited him to pitch even if it hadn't – his take on *Doctor Who* is, and always has been, very much in sync with the new series philosophy.

Colin Brake is a very visual writer with a huge TV background, so he's very used to the sort of approach the new *Doctor Who* series has taken. We asked him to step in at the last minute when Jac Rayner was unavoidably unable to write for us – her book will come out next year – and it's a great help that Colin's already worked with some of the people in Cardiff, which short-cuts some of the admin, and meant we could sell him to the 'Powers That Be' as a potential author as they already knew who he was and what he can do. Colin, like Mike and Steve, is great at coming up with a big, high concept idea and working from that to create a compelling story – in this case, a paradise planet where things are falling apart. Simple but intriguing...

Are you planning to incorporate Martha into the next batch of novels?

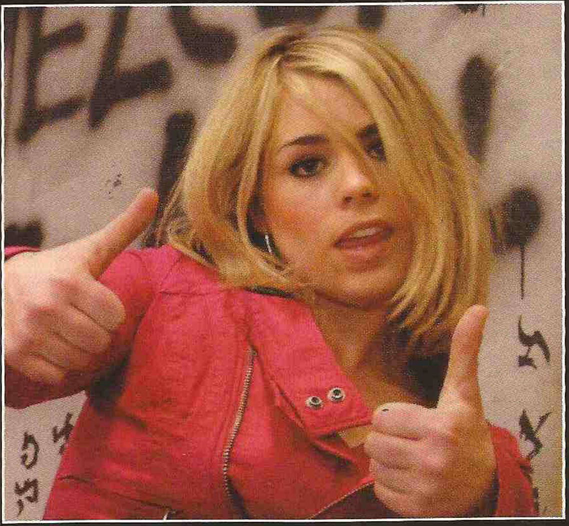
In theory we'll have Martha, she should present no more of a problem than Rose did for the first set of books, or the new Doctor in the last set – except that we don't even get a Christmas Special to look at this time! And like those first books, we won't publish til Martha's been on screen, so it'll be about two or three weeks into Series Three, which gives us a couple more weeks to get her character sorted. It won't be easy, but I think we really do need the new Doctor-Companion set up – because that is, after all, what we're tying in with.

And how is the range getting on?

The sales figures are up – *The Stone Rose* is already our best-selling novel, overtaking those original three Ninth Doctor books, which themselves sold fantastically well. That's partly because of the popularity of the character of Rose, partly because Jac Rayner is a terrific writer with a really good grasp of the main characters, and partly because – like the TV series – *Doctor Who* publishing really is going from strength to strength!

DAVID DARLINGTON

COMING IN DWM 376



MELANCHOLY ROSE!

We bid Rose Tyler a fond farewell, **DWM** style, as Philip MacDonald returns to analyse the character's two years aboard the TARDIS!

SAVING THE WORLDS!

Where have all the aliens gone? **DWM** takes a long, hard look at the various alien cultures that the Doctor's saved down the years and wonder – was it really worth the bother...?

MALUS AFORETHOUGHT!

Brush up on your civil war history (and Tegan's bizarrely huge family) as *The Fact of Fiction* turns its stony gaze to 1984 spook-fest *The Awakening*...

PLUS!

We chat to casting director Andy Pryor to find out how you choose just the right sort of actor to attempt universal conquest! We've also got the mind-bending conclusion of *Interstellar Overdrive*; a look behind the scenes of the newly-animated DVD of *The Invasion*; more new series exclusives in *Gallifrey Guardian*; Russell T Davies returns to pen another *Production Notes*; and not forgetting *The Time Team, Matrix Data Bank* and all your usual favourites!

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It's a mixed bunch this month, chums...

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

I read **DWM** 373 and I was dazzled by the *Family Affairs* feature. Noel Clarke, Shaun Dingwall and Camille Coduri really do seem like a 'family'. They obviously have a lot of chemistry together and that's very important to be successful in anything. Also, I am quite jealous of Noel and Shaun, because Camille is one sexy lady! Wow! Your magazine was the highlight of my evening, a very enjoyable read!

PAUL DALE ROBERTS E-MAIL

I would like to congratulate **DWM** on the *Family Reunion* between Camille, Noel and Shaun. It was a great way to round off their time at *Doctor Who* and say goodbye. Maybe Shaun and Noel should get their 'Preachers' Series, now we've lost *Rose Tyler: Earth Defence*?

ALEX FAGAN E-MAIL

LESSONS LEARNED

I very much enjoyed Simon Marsh's *Look & Learn with Dr Who* article in **DWM** 374. It's true that *Doctor Who* has been educational through the years, despite not all of its facts being accurate. Like Simon, I was unaware that Charles Dickens recited many of his novels on tours throughout Britain and died in 1870 before completing his book, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* until I watched *The Unquiet Dead*. But I've found the show to be educational in a number of areas, not just in history and science. I learned what 'serendipity' meant from watching *The Green Death*, and when asked to give its definition I say 'a happy accident', of course!

NIGEL SAWYER GEORGIA, USA

> "I am quite jealous of Noel and Shaun because Camille Coduri is one sexy lady! Wow!"

Thanks for the *Look & Learn* article, a great return to articles about *Doctor Who* rather than simply adverts for the TV series or the latest DVD. Let's hope that Martha Jones' medical knowledge is going to be better than Ian Chesterton's science! I dread to think how many parts your article would have been had you decided to chronicle the errors in science there have been over the years – even a secondary school student should be able to spot most of 'em!

JAMES HADWEN E-MAIL

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Is that it?! I've just read the confirmed extras for the *Complete Second Series* DVD Box Set and can't believe how much potential material has been overlooked. Where are the Tardisodes? Where are the *Blue Peter* clips (Abzorbaloff and all)? What about the BBC Wales reports? *BBC Breakfast? Totally Doctor Who? Attack of the Graske?* And why is it seen as best to put the cutdown *Doctor Who Confidential*s onto disc rather than the full versions?

Russell T Davies and the production crew have managed the franchise superbly well since 2005 but they've missed a bit of a trick here. Or is it simply the case that 2 | entertain wishes to bleed us all dry by issuing a deluxe version of the series sometime in the future?

The old episodes get the Rolls Royce treatment on DVD. Can't we expect the same for the BBC's current top drama series – a programme produced in the digital age?

PAUL ROWE E-MAIL

LOOK AWAY CHILDREN!

Eek! What on earth were you thinking of?! **DWM** 374, page 51: a picture of Cyberman with no pants on! Full colour and full frontal too! And there's another one on page 52 as well, although at least this one has been cropped to preserve its Cybermodesty...

KEVIN MILLYARD TWICKENHAM

STRIP OFF

In **DWM** 374's letters page, you replied to a query about the *TV21* Dalek strips, saying that these are the only *Doctor Who*-related strips to which you do not have the rights. This leads me to my own query: Does this mean that you do have the rights to reprint the old *Radio Times* strips featuring the Eighth Doctor? If so, is there any chance that these could be reprinted, perhaps in a magazine special, as were the recent Ninth Doctor strips? I would also like to say congratulations to Mike Collins on *The Futurists* – the best strip since *The Flood*.

ZOLTÁN DÉRY DYFED

Ah, sorry Zoltán, bit of bad luck there. When we wrote that response last issue, we were talking to Radio Times *about the possibility of reprinting their McGann strips as a bonus in the back of our next Graphic Novel, but I'm afraid we weren't able to secure the rights. Still, I'm sure those strips will appear again in some form before very long.*

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE...

Good to see Russell T Davies in his interview [**DWM** 374] acknowledge the bias for London settings in the new series of *Doctor Who*. It seems to me that a tourist postcard version of the city is being peddled, and it's a stunted and misleading image at that. True, the landmarks of London are iconic and instantly recognisable, but only because so many other films and TV shows have referenced them to the exclusion of the rest of the UK. Why can't *Doctor Who* take a small, brave step and begin to create new British icons at which the rest of the world – and the UK – can marvel?

To kick off, should the Nestene Consciousness need a transmitter for a second crack at invading Earth, it could do worse than the Angel of the North...

ANDREW MIDDLETON SHEFFIELD

Is it just me, or does David "I'm so sorry" Tennant say "I'm so sorry" a lot? Being a lazy sod, I haven't bothered to follow this up with any DVD-related research, but off the top of my rather attractive head I recall such apologetic comments in the cat hospital one (I'm not good with new episode titles) to all the diseased people; to Martha-Jones-Before-She-

We also heard from... **NICK MELLISH:** "Three cheers for *The Fact of Fiction*, long may it continue! I'd love to see *Inside the Spaceship* tackled, though quite what would be said I'm not sure...." **P HODGES:** "I've been curious about the writer Chris Chibnall – is this the same Chris Chibnall who appeared on the BBC's *Open Air* back in 1986? The chap on *Open Air* was from a DWAS Local Group and was very vocal about the failings of the then-current series as I recall..." Bizarrely enough, yes it is! Sorry Chris! **NEIL STEWART:** "If, as you stated in **DWM** 374, we got Martha as the new companion instead of 'a clone of Victoria', does that mean that BBC Wales has a clone of Victoria that they're not using? And if so, could I have it...?"

Became-Martha-Jones in that last Cyberman episode; to various other dead or dying people during the series; and even creeping into your comic strip (to Valente in *The Futurists*). Is this a new catchphrase, of a jelly baby/eyepatch variety?

J KING CONWY

PEACE, MAN!

I find that I must finally put pen to paper over the letter from Gordon England that appeared in **DWM** 373.

I have formed opinions on *Doctor Who* for many years that have not always been the norm. I thought that Colin Baker's depiction of the Doctor was a breath of fresh air (back when such thoughts could lead to being burnt at the stake as a heretic) and was not overly fond of Christopher Eccleston's Doctor (which did lead to some very lively debates) but one thing has never been in question – that I love *Doctor Who*.

Until now, it seems. Gordon seems to imply that any view other than his is just "slagging the show off". I was not fond of *Love & Monsters* on first viewing. I admired its creativity (in the same way that *The Mind Robber* Episode 1 was creative when faced with production issues) but I did not think that the idea carried 45 minutes. If we all liked *The Horns of Nimon* (which I don't) and all hated *The Idiot's Lantern* (which I love), then you would find it very dificult to find interesting comments to fill your letters page.

Diversity of views is what keeps *Doctor Who* fresh. They should be encouraged not stiffled. Nobody who buys this magazine dislikes the programme, they just differ on what is great, mediocre and poor. That is one of the joys of *Doctor Who* fandom (which I believe *Love & Monsters* embraced) not a threat that must be stamped out.

DAVID HOBSON E-MAIL

Talking of which...

In response to the letter about Daleks and Cybermen (**DWM** 374), Daleks *are* better than Cybermen, and the Anne Droid actually had a transmat, and so did not kill any Daleks. So there!

DECLAN KITCHENER E-MAIL

NYSSA, WE MISS 'ER...

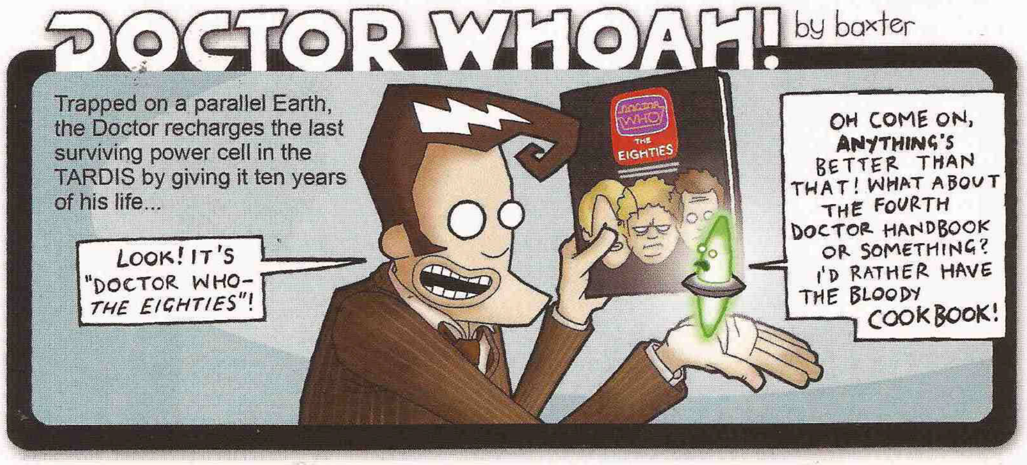
Series One was the most exciting thing to happen on TV for a very long time. One year on, *Doctor Who* is still way ahead of anything else in the schedules, but let's face it; some very large cracks are already beginning to appear. Something needs to be done, and I know exactly what it is. Russell needs to move fast and do whatever it takes to BRING BACK NYSSA!!! Not as a one-off blast from the past like Sarah Jane, but as a more-or-less regular character, if not a full-time companion.

Sarah Sutton's contribution has often been casually dismissed, even by **DWM**, and watching those episodes again, it's startling to see how often she is literally obscured from view by Janet Fielding's head. She was woefully under-used by scriptwriters but the fact remains that Sarah Sutton worked brilliantly within the limitations imposed on her, and made Nyssa the most interesting and genuinely likeable character in the show's history. Outwardly reserved, scientifically detached and with more than a whiff of cultural and technological snobbery, Nyssa reveals herself to be a deeply compassionate, gentle and courageous character. Rarely dwelling on her own tragic circumstances, she spends much of her time acting as voice-of-reason and peacemaker to her endlessly bickering companions.

Rose Tyler was not at all loveable. She's shallow, selfish, frequently spiteful and above all, a real loudmouth. Well, it may be the twenty-first century, but for some of us a character like Nyssa is still far, far more empathetic, far more like the person we'd like to be, or indeed the girl we'd like to go out with. And so what if she's from an alien planet? Recent photos show that Ms Sutton is more beautiful than ever, and for this reason alone it's a crime not to get her on TV at every possible opportunity!

Besides, I want to know what happened to her after *Terminus*...

PAUL CARNEY E-MAIL


DOCTOR WHOAH! by baxter
Trapped on a parallel Earth, the Doctor recharges the last surviving power cell in the TARDIS by giving it ten years of his life...
LOOK! IT'S "DOCTOR WHO- THE EIGHTIES"!
DOCTOR WHO THE EIGHTIES
OH COME ON, ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN THAT! WHAT ABOUT THE FOURTH DOCTOR HANDBOOK OR SOMETHING? I'D RATHER HAVE THE BLOODY COOKBOOK!

Egads! I think he means it... Meanwhile some of Russell T Davies' comments about alien planets seem to have upset a few of our more far-flung readers...

LAY OFF PLANET ZOG!

Greetings from the Desk of Supreme Ruler Zog, of the Fantastically Exotic Planet of Zog.

We the Supreme Ruler Zog of Zog would very much like to drop a quick line to all you delightfully humdrum council-estate-dwelling Earthlings of Earth – hulloo from Zog and everyone on the exotically alien planet of Zog!

Oh, how we've missed you! I really can't tell you how much we have missed you. Things have been very exciting here recently on Zog, believe it or not. We were just talking about this, me and Chancellor Zog, my trusty companion and helpmeet. We were up on my balcony overlooking the vast plains of the desert of Zog. The shifting scarlet sands of the desert of Zog surround the ineffably alien and wondrously futuristic city of Zog, of course, as you probably remember.

Anyway, Chancellor Zog was standing there in his copperplate britches and his silver cloak and he was blinking his three livid lime green eyes at me with an almost unbearably pathos-filled deliquescence and he warbled: "Why, what with the Robot Slaves' Revolution, and the Uprising of the Zogmonster, and the Surprise Invasion by the Rabid Lice-Gods of Niff, I'd have thought the people of Earth would have been a bit more interested, wouldn't you, Supreme Commander Zog? O wonderful Supremo of Exotic Zog?"

I flung out my own silver cape and marched up and down the wide balcony of my palace throne room, gazing out at the inscrutable skies of beloved Zog. Our three moons were rising just as the four suns were going down. Oh marvellous and multi-hued skies of Zog! And the flying elephants of Vish were swooping about in the far, cloud-curdled distances, and needlelike space craft were streaking up into the empyrean pink, on new star-spanning adventures beyond time and space.

"I agree, Chancellor Zog," I sighed, and clapped my deputy heavily on his third shoulder. He started to weep blue crystal tears and they spilled down his tight tunic front. "Perhaps one day they will learn to care about us again."

What did we do? Did we do something to offend you? What's wrong with fantastically exotic Zog? Don't you give a monkey's anymore?

ZOG OF ZOG (VIA PAUL MAGRS)

Are there tax breaks for setting comic strips there do you know...?

"THE SHOW DOESN'T DISAPPEAR IN A PUFF OF SMOKE IF THE DOCTOR SNOGS SOMEONE. I'M INTERESTED IN HOW WE CAN TWEAK THE ESTABLISHED MYTH WITHOUT PULLING IT APART..."

Words by **BENJAMIN COOK**

"This is a heady time for me, for good or ill. But the good bits and the bad bits, as they fly by, are unique to this portion of my life. The last year has been extraordinary. It's unlike anything that I've done before, and, without doubt, anything that I'll ever do again. That's quite humbling and, if you think about it too much, a bit overwhelming."

So says David Tennant, the Tenth Doctor, settled on a sofa in his luxury Cardiff apartment. Executive producer Russell T Davies lives in the same block. David's apartment is bigger than Russell's ("a cause of much bitterness," he teases), and has a more spectacular view – but it doesn't smell of cigarettes, so, you know, swings and roundabouts. A framed photograph of David with co-stars Billie Piper and Peter Kay – taken on the set of *Love & Monsters* – is displayed in his living room, the current issue of **DWM** sits on his coffee table, and various action figures – including one of himself, brandishing the sonic screwdriver – are on a shelf near his TV.

"It's a very odd, and very privileged place to be," he continues. "When I talk to Russell, Julie [Gardner, executive producer], and Phil [Collinson, producer] about it, we all agree that it's an extraordinary thing to be living through. It's something to do with playing with people's icons – this show has that status. I don't think there is anything else like it. Maybe [James Bond actor] Daniel Craig is having a similar experience? But it's fairly unlikely that I'll play another part that, for example, has magazines devoted to it, or two other television programmes about the television programme that I'm doing!"

It's Wednesday, 2 August 2006. David has spent most of today "in a fairly manky disused factory" on Newport Docks, filming this year's Christmas special, *The Runaway Bride*, with guest stars Catherine Tate ("today was her last day," he says, "but it's been a hoot") and Sarah Parish ("who takes 'scenery-chewing villain' to a new level – it's glorious to witness"). Tomorrow is the final day of principal shooting on the special – a couple of TARDIS scenes, and that's a wrap. "For the last couple of days, we've been shooting the climax," explains David. "The factory is a really smelly, dirty place, which has myriad smells – I mean, it seems to be a mixture of dung, fuel, and chemical toilets. As Sarah said, it smells like Glastonbury, which it really does. But it's a perfect location."

Fortunately, David is still on a high from Sunday night, which he spent with his girlfriend Sophia Myles, *Torchwood* stars John Barrowman and Eve Myles, and the Queen of Pop herself, Madonna, at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium – the first date of the European leg of Madge's *Confessions* tour. "She's a phenomenon," says David. "There's no other word for her, really. She's quite extraordinary. It was a great gig."

The complimentary tickets must have helped. When I ask David what attracted him to the free concert, he laughs: ▶

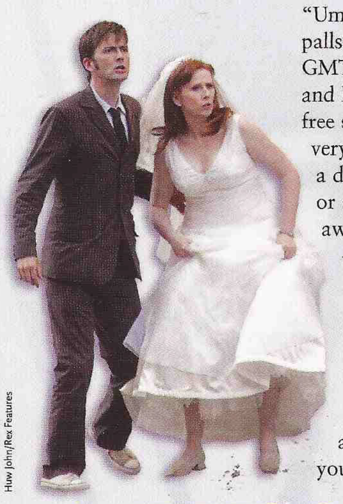
▲ *Above:* The Christmas Invasion *proved a baptism of fire – or tinsel – for the Tenth Doctor, and for David...*

▼ *One year on:* The Runaway Bride *sees David joined by Catherine Tate.*

"I'll have you know, when I was 14, the first single that I ever bought was *Like a Virgin*. When I was, well, whatever age I was, 13 or 14, she was kind of my sexual awakening, if I'm honest. I had some fairly full-on posters of her on my wall. I don't know what my parents made of that." I'm sure they knew exactly what was going on. "But I, of course, didn't think that they did," he points out, and after a pause: "You can be remarkably naïve at that age. But I thought she was a great musician, and I still do. She still looks damn fit as well. She's 47, I believe. She looks incredible."

Does David get a lot of freebies now that he's famous?

"EVEN WHEN YOU'RE OFF DOING OTHER THINGS THIS SHOW KIND OF FOLLOWS YOU. IT'S JUST HUGE – BUT I'VE GOT NO COMPLAINTS!"



Huw John/Rex Features

"Um – you get invited to film premières and stuff, but that palls quite quickly, because you end up having to speak to GMTV, and be photographed... You're promised by myth and legend that once you're on the telly, people will force free stuff upon you, but I haven't found that – certainly very few free things that I've actually wanted. BAFTA had a decent goody bag this year. You have to be a nominee or a 'citation reader' to get one, and I presented Russell's award. There was a DVD player, and some other stuff – lots of cosmetics, which you can give away to suitable parties, and make yourself popular." Have you given any of it as presents and pretended that you bought it yourself? "I haven't quite had the gall to do that. I always 'fess up."

David appears relatively untouched by success and fame: he comes across as unpretentious ("talking about acting is so difficult," he says, at one point, "because you sound like a wanker almost immediately!"), self-effacing ("it's difficult to think of myself as someone that anyone would really be that interested in"), engagingly modest, and without airs. "The fame thing has kind of crept up on me," he admits. "It's more difficult to do anything now without being clocked – which is fine, because most people are enthusiastic, and generous. It's not a difficult show to represent on the street, because people tend to love it. It would be churlish of me in the extreme to start complaining about being famous now. It's a wonderful, privileged position to be in.

"The only place that it's weird," he continues, "is in the gym. I don't go to the gym as much as I should, but I do now and again, and if you're in the changing rooms, and you're all pink, and naked, and bedraggled after an hour on a running machine or whatever, maybe an hour trying to lift some weights that are far too heavy, and you're standing there and somebody comes up and asks for an autograph...! You're standing there literally bollock-naked, and sweaty, and that's the only time that I think, 'This is inappropriate.' Or worse – if *they're* all pink, and puffy, and naked!"

You strike me as the kind of bloke who'll still sign them an autograph... "I do. I just go, 'Yes, of course, who's it to?' – like an eejit! But I don't know what's the appropriate response. Is it appropriate to go, 'This is weird. I don't want to look at your genitals while I sign an autograph...'? You have to keep in your head that it's a rare – in some ways, unique – moment for this person, so one has a duty to try to be gracious, and sensitive."

EPISODE BY EPISODE

Children in Need

"We filmed that in one manic morning, with Euros [Lyn, the director] doing huge tracking shots around the TARDIS.

Euros likes to run long takes on things, which is great from a performance point of view, but can be exhausting as the day wears on."

David and Billie also recorded inserts in costume, appealing for donations, claiming to be each other. "Did they show that on the telly?! Did they put that on the actual television? How fantastic! We never thought they'd show that. I'm amazed, and slightly shocked. Those appeals can be so deathly. First of all, you're appearing as yourself, which is always a bit tricky, and you're having to do some bloodless appeal for cash

POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

▲ Above: Director James Hawes gets to grips with the new Doctor in *The Christmas Invasion*.

▼ Post-regenerative trauma saw David flat on his back for much of the Christmas special.

Rewind three-and-a-half years to March 2003, nearly six months to the day before Lorraine Heggessey, then-Controller of BBC One, stunned approximately everyone by confirming that *Doctor Who* would be returning to the airwaves within two years, and that the man in charge would be award-winning writer and producer Russell T Davies. **DWM** is sat in a rehearsal room at a small South London recording studio, interviewing a relatively unknown actor called David Tennant. Down the corridor, audio-play production company Big Finish is recording *Sympathy for the Devil*, one of the *Doctor Who Unbound* spin-off adventures that feature alternative versions of the Doctor. David is not playing the Doctor; he's playing UNIT's Colonel Brimmicombe-Wood, alongside distinguished thesp David Warner as the Doctor, Nicholas Courtney reprising his TV role of Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, and *The League of Gentlemen*'s Mark Gatiss as the Doctor's arch nemesis, the Master.

"I think David will go a long way," Mark told **DWM** earlier. "He's a promising young actor, with a very firm bottom." In the chilly climes of the rehearsal room, I ask David – firm bottom perched on a small stool – whether he thinks that *Doctor Who* will ever return to television. "I don't see any reason why it can't go on forever in some form," he answers. "These audio plays are vibrant, and full of life, and certainly full of creativity, so there's no reason why can't they go on for the foreseeable future? I mean, I love the show. Obviously, as someone with a vested interest, I'm desperate for it to come back to TV, but I think it probably will before too long, just because the format is so original, and TV and film executives often sort of 'heat up' franchises that have worked before. I suspect that the franchise will keep going for a good while yet." Prophetic words indeed from the future Tenth Doctor.

Fast-forward three months to June 2003. **DWM** is sat in a car park outside another – slightly larger – studio complex in London (back in the olden days, **DWM** wasn't allowed indoors, lest we get muddy paw prints on the furniture), inside of which BBC bods are recording *Doctor Who* internet drama *Scream of the Shalka*. David recognises **DWM** (yes, it really did happen *that* way round!) from the recording of *Sympathy for the Devil*, and heads over to say hello. However, he isn't here to play the Doctor; Richard E Grant is playing the Doctor – the official ninth incarnation, according to the BBC (how times would change). David is ▶

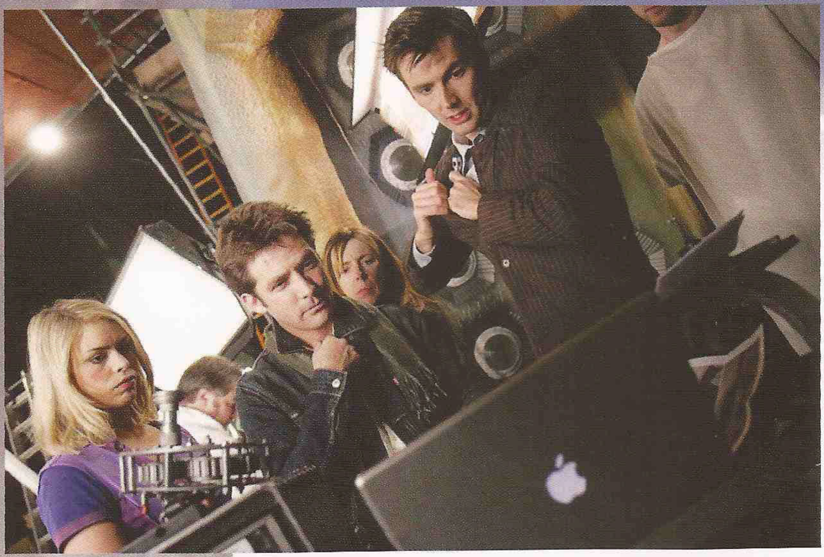
– relevant, and good, and worthy though that may be, it's just very difficult to sex it up a bit, isn't it? How do you make it interesting? So we swapped names, pathetically, and thought that we were being funny. A nation groaned, no doubt..."

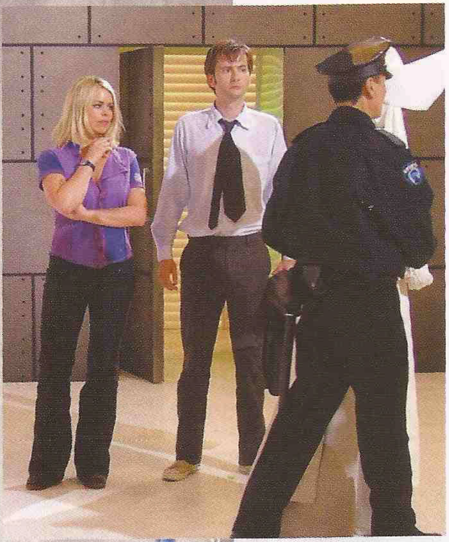
The Christmas Invasion

"Ah, very fond memories – a feeling of being welcomed, which was important at the time. Feeling that it had been the right decision. Big speeches to learn. Big swordfight to learn. I'll try not to say the obvious thing – 'great script' – which I'll probably end up saying about every single episode."

New Earth

"The Face of Boe being broken! Billie's boyfriend broke it. And over-running like mad. Filming





recording a Radio 4 adaptation of Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice* and his Educated Rodents, but he's found out that *Doctor Who* is in the studio next door, and has sweet-talked the director, Wilson Milam, into giving him a cameo role. That's how much David loves *Doctor Who*. "I play Caretaker 2," he tells **DWM**, proudly. "It's very hard not to get excited."

Fast-forward another three months. It's early-September 2003, and we're just three weeks away from Lorraine Heggessey's momentous announcement. David is recording *Exile*, another of Big Finish's *Doctor Who Unbound* audio plays. He's not the Doctor in this one either; he's playing Time Lord 2. His close friend – and star of *The Fast Show* – Arabella Weir is playing a female version of the Doctor. David used to lodge with Arabella, and is now godfather to her youngest child.

"I knew that David would love it if I did this play," explains Arabella, "so I said, 'Yes, of course I'll do it.' My agent was surprised – she said, 'You never say "yes" to things straight away' – but I said, 'I'm doing it because of David. He'll never forgive me if I don't.' Of course, if I didn't know David, I'd not be aware of **Doctor Who Magazine**. David gets it every month, so a whole new world has opened up to me. But I may not be subscribing just yet." She smiles a huge smile. "Then again..." In the recording booth, Arabella is burping in David's face. The script requires lots of belching, and some bottom burps. It's like *Aliens of London*, but not as funny. Astonishingly, despite his impressive range, David is unable to burp on cue, so Arabella is helping him out. "Do I get a pound of his money?" she asks. "A pound a belch?" splutters David. "That's shameful opportunism, Arabella!" "I bet Pru Scales doesn't do anybody else's belching." David laughs. "I just can't... I mean, I don't have that skill." "So," she smiles, "I really am uniquely skilled, especially for a lady."

Fast-forward almost two years. This time, David *is* the Doctor! It's July 2005, and Christopher Eccleston's Ninth Doctor has

scenes months later to feed them back in. It was technically one of the hardest episodes ever, in terms of the number of prosthetics, and CGI elements, and it didn't all go as smoothly as it might have. It was quite stressful, *New Earth*."

Tooth and Claw

"Great fun! Lots of Scottish actors laughing a lot. And running a lot. And Pauline Collins swearing just being the funniest thing ever. And Josh [Green, the wolf stand-in] in his skin-tight bodysuit – an abiding memory, seared into my mind!"

School Reunion

"Elisabeth Sladen, Anthony Head, and K9 – I mean, it was my third week on the job or something, and it was an overload of awesome!"

"BILLIE AND I RELIED UPON EACH OTHER PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY AND I DO MISS HER A LOT. WE'LL DEFINITELY STAY IN TOUCH."

come and gone in a blaze of glory and tabloid front pages. David is on South London's Brandon Estate, filming *The Christmas Invasion* – the scene in which Rose, Mickey, and Jackie carry the newly-regenerated Doctor into the TARDIS, as a Sycorax spaceship hovers overhead. David and Billie arrive on set together in a people carrier. Billie is first out – cigarette in one hand, mobile in the other. David, in striped pyjamas and a dressing gown, clambers out after her. "As soon as she appeared," recalls David, afterwards, "all the kids watching the filming darted towards her. But Billie was holding this cigarette. She couldn't let the kids see her smoking, so she hastily handed it to the nearest member of the crew... which happened to be me! I was left kind of going, 'What am I going to do with this?' And then the kids spotted me – I was surrounded – and they must have wondered why the new Doctor, hero to millions of kids, was standing there in pyjamas and a dressing gown, apparently smoking a fag! Oh, I was so shamed..."

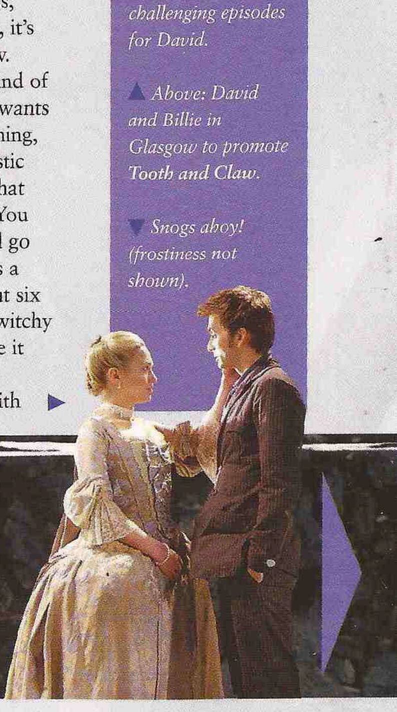
A year down the line, back in his Cardiff apartment, **DWM** asks David whether that first week on *Doctor Who* seems as long ago as 12 whole months. "In some ways, it's hurtled by," he says. "In other ways, it's felt like a long time, just because it's such a huge show. Even when you're off doing other things, this show kind of follows you – every day there will be somebody who wants you to talk about it, or sign something. It's all-consuming, because it's so scrutinised, and loved, and that's fantastic – this isn't a complaint, or a grumble – but it means that every day is full of it, and that's a huge undertaking. You don't know what that feels like until you're in it. I did go on holiday for ten days – I had ten days in Sardinia as a break from the show – and I just conked out for about six days. But then, for the last few, I started to get a bit twitchy – missing it, I suppose – and worrying that back home it had all, I don't know, exploded or something!"

How has he found coming back for a new series with ▶

◀ *Opposite:* ***New Earth*** *was one of the most technically challenging episodes for David.*

▲ *Above: David and Billie in Glasgow to promote* ***Tooth and Claw.***

▼ *Snogs ahoy! (frostiness not shown).*



The Girl in the Fireplace

"My abiding memory is being on tour, because we never do that – we hardly ever leave Cardiff. But we went to Stratford, to Ragley Hall, and stayed in a hotel – all of us together. I wasn't needed on set one morning, so I stayed in my room, and tried to get a bit of extra sleep, not something you often get on *Doctor Who*, but the cleaners kept knocking on the door. I'd tell them to come back later, but they came in anyway. I said, 'But I put Do Not Disturb on the door!' They said, 'Yeah, some people do that...!' I mean, what's the point of having a Do Not Disturb sign?!"

Maybe they just wanted to catch a glimpse of you in bed? "But this was before *The Pink Paper* had voted me 'Sexiest Man in the Universe'! I don't know what they were thinking."

"THE DOCTOR IS IN A SLIGHTLY TRAGIC PLACE AT THE MOMENT – HE'S LOST ROSE AND SUDDENLY HE'S PLUNGED INTO A NEW ADVENTURE..."

▲ *Above: Oh the glamour! Hiding behind some bins in* ***The Age of Steel*** *with Helen Griffin, Shaun Dingwall and Billie Piper.*

▲▼ *Above right and below: More from the Cybermen two-parter, which David found 'overwhelming' – and very cold!*

▶ *Below right: With Freema Agyeman and* ***that*** *shirt...!*

▶ *Opposite: Going underground in* ***The Satan Pit.***

no Billie Piper? "It is odd," he acknowledges. "In every other way, coming back is just about exactly the same – like slipping into a comfy old coat – because three months isn't long enough to forget what it felt like. But Billie was the only other cast member there every single day, and we relied on each other professionally, and personally, and I do miss her a lot. She's a pal. It was always nice to see her every morning. But Catherine has been great to share that first bit of time with, and I'm sure that when Freema [Agyeman, who plays new companion Martha] starts next week, she will be too. You just adapt, don't you? There are other types of fun to be had. I saw Billie at the weekend, so I'd be amazed if we don't say in touch. Yeah, of course we will."

Donna the bride, explains David, is a "very different" sort of companion to Rose – "she doesn't really want to be there, she has no interest in travelling around the universe, and finds it really gets in the way of her social life. That's rather brilliant, because it allows the audience to kind of go somewhere different, and takes away that expectation of the Rose-shaped hole. It allows us to do things with the companion that you can't do if she's there every week. It's a masterstroke, really, to have created Donna. Whenever there are these tricky moments in the development of the show, Russell always knows where to take it.

"I was a fan of Catherine's before," says David, "and I'm an enormous fan now. I'm a disciple. She's funny, but she's an actor first and foremost – that's what she trained as, and that's how she sees herself, quite rightly. She's such a strong personality, and you can really exploit that. In a sense, the Doctor is the straight man in their relationship; usually the companion is the straight man, but Donna is the loose cannon in this episode. That's been interesting to play, and quite useful, because the Doctor is in a slightly tragic place at the moment. He's still getting over something that has happened literally moments before – he said goodbye to Rose, and then suddenly he's plunged into this new story."

Has David had a chance to brief Freema on what to expect as Billie's more long-term successor? "I think she knows a bit, because she was in Episode 12 [*Army of Ghosts*], so it's not completely foreign to her. She seems excited rather than nervous, enthusiastic rather than daunted – that's the impression I get – and that's where you want to be, I should think, so there's nothing to advise. She's no reason to be daunted or nervous, because she can palpably do it – she's obviously a good actress. This show gets a lot of scrutiny, so she wouldn't have got the gig unless everyone was certain that she can do it. It'll be fascinating to see how she slots into the team."

Earlier in the day that I interviewed Freema for **DWM** [see Issue 372], she'd done her first ever *Doctor Who* photo shoot, and seemed to have enjoyed it thoroughly. Isn't it a bit unfortunate, then, that she was almost upstaged by David's shirt? "Are you saying that I was upstaging Freema before she'd ▶

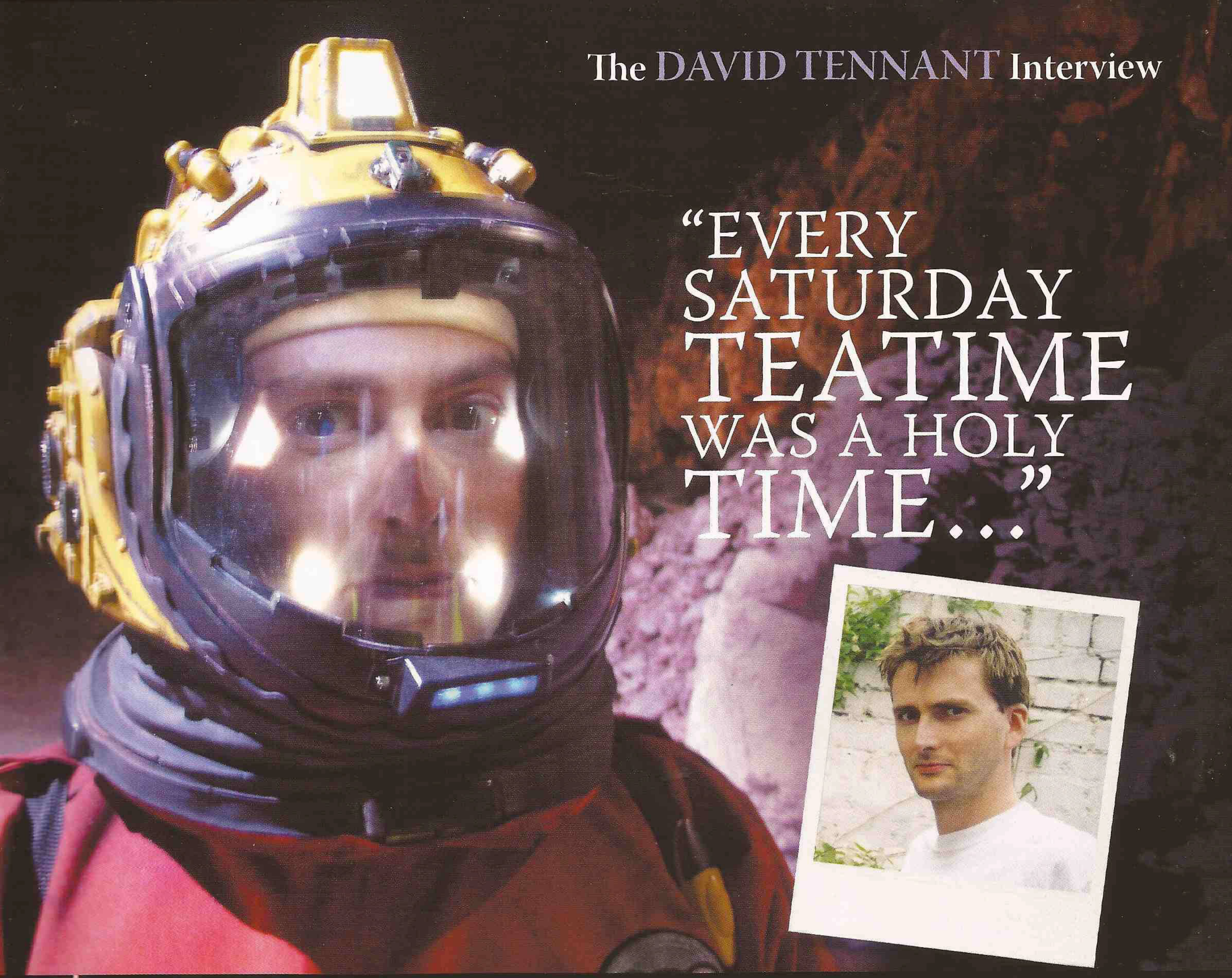
Rise of the Cybermen/ The Age of Steel

"Very cold nights on location. It snowed. The Cybermen were fairly overwhelming. And the Tyler family all together – a nice place to be. I'd never met Shaun Dingwall [Pete Tyler] before, but he quickly became part of the clan. He's a lovely guy."

The Idiot's Lantern

"I never got to ride the moped! I got pushed in and out of shot a bit, but basically it's a stuntman in most shots. It was old and difficult to control, that bike, and there were a host of insurance issues

The DAVID TENNANT Interview



"EVERY SATURDAY TEATIME WAS A HOLY TIME…"

On 24 March 2003, a couple of years before he was cast as the Doctor, **DWM** interviewed David at the recording of Big Finish Productions' *Sympathy for the Devil*. The interview was never published, but here, for the first time, is an edited transcript…

Tell us about your character in Sympathy for the Devil.
Colonel Brimmicombe-Wood is in charge of a division of UNIT based in Hong Kong just as the British are about to hand it over. He's superseded Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, who we all know and love. He's come across the Brigadier before, and doesn't have a great deal of time for him, and he develops a similar view of the Doctor.

What is it like to join such an institution as Doctor Who?
It's just fantastic. I did *Colditz* [a Big Finish *Doctor Who* play starring Sylvester McCoy] about 18 months ago, and since then I've been asked to sign a couple of CD inserts and things like that, and you kind of think, 'wow, I'm part of a national institution now!' It's very exciting, because it's something that I grew up with.

What, then, are your memories of growing up with Doctor Who?
They stretch right back. I mean, I'm 31 now, and I think I can remember watching Jon Pertwee regenerating into Tom Baker… but I would only have been three or four, so I don't know if I'm making that up. It must be one of my first memories. Or maybe I saw a repeat? Maybe I was six or something? I remember being bemused and fascinated by it, and from then on I was glued to it. Every Saturday teatime was a holy time… and all the way through Peter Davison… and then I went to drama school, so I suppose I kind of lost touch with it a little bit, and then rediscovered it later.

What is David Warner like to work with? Does he make a good Doctor?
He's somebody that I've known for a while. I'm proud to say that I was slightly instrumental in getting him here today, so I'm rather chuffed that it's worked out. He's perfect. He's absolutely perfect. He's got this quality that's from somewhere else. He's also a fantastic actor, which I think is what the role really needs.

Is there a special technique to audio acting?
I've done quite a lot of radio now, and various audiocassettes and things, and in some ways it's more technical than other mediums, because it's about channelling something through your voice, and you're telling stories vocally that you would otherwise tell visually. But also it's very liberating – I mean, I'm playing quite a rough, tough, grizzly army type in this, which I probably wouldn't be cast as on screen, because I'm not particularly strapping. On audio, I can be as strapping as I like! A bit of a growl in my voice, and I can get away with it.

Must you resist the temptation to overact in Doctor Who? Or is that part of the fun?
There's a certain kind of largesse to the performance. You need to give it a bit of bite. It ain't *The Office*. It's not naturalism. But it's got to be truthful, or it becomes, like some of the less successful performances in *Doctor Who*, just a little bit ridiculous. As long as it's based in truth, it can be quite large, actually, and still be fantastic. Tom Baker is a great case in point – he was way over the top, but you still always believed what he was doing. That conviction carries you, and I think that's what you need for *Doctor Who* – a certain vigour, and a certain vim, but based on the reality of the situation, however outlandish that situation may be.

Would you like to do Doctor Who again?
I'd do it like a shot. It's such fun. Every now and again, I drop Big Finish an e-mail to let them know that I'm still very interested in doing more, and I badger Mark [Gatiss] whenever I speak to him in case he has any influence in anything that's coming up. There were a couple of ones last year that they tried to get me in on, but I couldn't do them, just because of dates, which was so frustrating. I was spitting blood about that. So it's great that this one's worked out.

even begun?!" He cracks up. "What kind of a swine do you take me for?" It is, let's be honest, an... unusual choice of shirt. "We were styled that day. I don't particularly like being prodded, and tweaked, and pampered, but the pair of us were styled by somebody posh. It wasn't my choice of shirt." You could have said no. "Hang on, what shirt are we talking about? I've got the magazine here..."

He grabs the **DWM** from the coffee table, and flicks to page 9. It's the floral shirt. The pink and blue floral shirt. "Oh, I like this shirt! Do you know, they gave me that shirt as a present on the day, because I was raving about it so much. I heartily embraced it. Do you think it's a bit much?" Few men could pull it off... "That could be a backhanded compliment."

He turns to a photo on the following page in which he's wearing a blue shirt and navy jacket. "That's almost dull," he insists, "whereas *that*" – he flicks back to page 9 – "is interesting. I like the shirt, and I will be seen out in it again, mark my words." After a short silence: "I've no problem with the shirt." Another pause. "Look, what's wrong with my shirt?!" No comment. "Oh. Well, I like to be brave!"

David looks remarkably similar off screen to how he looks on it. Television doesn't alter him, and doesn't seem to add 10 pounds like it's supposed to. "Before I was on the telly," he muses, "whenever I was written about, they'd use words like 'gawky', and 'beanpole', and they were fairly unpleasant. But I don't have any choice – basically, it's what I am. I don't change body shape easily. I tried a bit of training for *Casanova*, but it takes an awful lot of work to make any difference whatsoever. If people like it, that's great; if they don't, I'm very sorry, there's nothing I can do about it."

Actually, David scores particularly well on the 'sex appeal' barometer. 'Very hot,' concluded *The Times*' Caitlin Moran (the woman who brought us the noun 'Timephwoard'), after watching *The Christmas Invasion*. 'He's twinkly, he's foppish, he's clever, he's taller than you'd expect...' David is popular with the fellas, too: earlier this year, he was voted the most attractive male in a poll conducted by gay newspaper

that meant that unless I passed various exams, which I never managed to pass, I wasn't allowed to ride it. I had one afternoon in which to pass these exams, so I turned up, fell off within the first 30 seconds, and Phil Collinson, the producer, pulled the whole thing – he was worried that I was going to damage myself! So that all went a bit wrong. But even the stuntman – who was like the best motorcycle stuntman in the business – couldn't work that aged sewing-machine of a motorcycle, so what chance did I have...?"

It sounds as though you're making excuses, there, David. "And you may not be entirely wrong about that..."

The Pink Paper, beating popular pin-up Brad Pitt, and then-England captain David Beckham. Is he a deserving recipient of the 'Sexiest Man in the Universe' accolade?

"I didn't vote for it," he exclaims. "Don't ask me! I didn't register a vote! But I was particularly chuffed. Before that, I was just 'skinny, gawky freak boy.' A couple of months later, another magazine published a similar poll, and I think I made number 20 in that..."

Indeed, a poll of over 10,000 women for the March issue of *New Woman* ranked David 20th in their list of the 'Top 100 Men', which isn't bad. "Not bad? It's amazing! But 20th with the chicks, and first with the guys? I think that's a harder audience to crack, so I'm proud of that. I think gay men are much fussier. The only thing about being voted number one is that there's nowhere to go. When I'm not number one next year, that'll be hard to take."

> "IN THE **SEXIEST MEN POLL** I WAS **20TH** WITH THE CHICKS, AND **FIRST** WITH THE **GUYS!** NOW THAT'S A HARDER AUDIENCE – **GAY MEN** ARE MUCH FUSSIER – SO I'M **PROUD!**"

Being heralded as the sexiest Doctor ever is all well and good, but do you reckon that you're at an advantage having directly followed Christopher Eccleston? "That," says David, "is a very leading question! What do you expect me to say? I mean, Chris is fancied by many..." But his is an unconventional sexiness. "*I'm* not conventional! I'm not Brad Pitt." You beat Brad in the poll. "Yes, I did. Thank you for pointing that out. But it's all nonsense, of course. It's absolute gibberish. You have to take these things with a pinch of salt. But it's flattering while it lasts."

Has David got used to 'being' the Doctor yet? Does he feel like the tenth actor in a line that includes Patrick Troughton, Tom Baker, and Christopher Eccleston? "I'd say no, really, because you're just in it, doing it, and the way that you're describing it there has a certain kind of iconic status that is absolutely impossible to apply to yourself." It must, in all seriousness, have been particularly daunting following Christopher. "Of course. He's a very good actor, and had done it very well. But then I wouldn't have had it any other way. I wouldn't have wanted it to be somebody who was a bit rubbish, and the show had been on the skids, and it was something that everyone was laughing at. Yes, it is daunting to take over from someone like Chris, because he's so strong, and such a big actor, but better that than Paul Daniels! The fact that Chris had done it made it easier to say yes to it, because I love the show, and would have always wanted to do it, but it would have been a harder career choice if Chris hadn't done it and given it the kudos that he brings to any project. It would have been more difficult to convince my agent – or myself – that it was a good career move. So thank goodness for Chris, really."

When David heard that *Doctor Who* was coming back, he begged his agent to get him a role in it – "but I never thought, 'I want to play the Doctor.' I might have joked about that, but I genuinely never thought that way. Also, I'd just got a job with Russell – I was doing *Casanova* – so I thought, 'I've got to get a part in *Doctor Who*. I just want to be in an episode.' Playing the Doctor was not something that I actually believed that I'd be asked to do."

I wonder what David has learned about the character of the Doctor over the last year. The question elicits a lengthy pause, before he volunteers: "What I suppose is eternally fascinating is the emotional side of someone who apparently has no emotional side. The relationship with Rose became, to all intents and purposes, a love story. You learn how

►

*▲ This spread: the many looks of Doctor David: Moody and wind-swept in **Doomsday**, space cadet in **The Satan Pit**, fifties throwback in **The Idiot's Lantern**... plus the 'just trying to keep warm in a horrible cold factory' look!*

The Impossible Planet/ The Satan Pit

"A script that seemed to push the limits of what the show had done before. It was great to have a little ensemble cast that was there for the whole five weeks, because it was two episodes, so it was a real little family for a while. And the experience of finally seeing what I'd been acting opposite – literally, a little flap of green screen became this extraordinary creation, this slavering beast on the TV screen – was one of the most thrilling moments of seeing the series completed."

Love & Monsters

"A very brief appearance from myself and Billie. Of course, it's hard not to mention Peter Kay [the Abzorbaloff]

"TALL, SKINNY SCOTTISH BLOKE SEEKS DISSIMILAR."

Honey Nut
Shredded Wheat

On 21 September 1999, *The Guardian* published an interview with David, in which he revealed, for the first time publicly, his addiction to Honeynut Shredded Wheat, and his aversion to McDonalds, and the Conservative Party. Seven years later, **DWM** wonders whether David is still a Honeynut-guzzling, burger-bating socialist...

How would you describe yourself in a lonely-hearts ad?

1999 *'Tall, skinny Scottish bloke seeks dissimilar.'*

2006 'Do you want to go out with that bloke off *Doctor Who*?' That'd cut to the chase. You might get some quite unusual responses, mind you. That might not be the best approach.

What was the last illegal thing you did?

1999 *I couldn't possibly comment.*

2006 I got speeding-fined twice in one journey. It was the middle of the night. The roads were deserted. I was on my way back to London. That's one of the downsides to living in Wales.

What was the last kind-hearted thing you did?

1999 *I couldn't possibly comment.*

2006 As soon as you admit to it, it ceases to be kind-hearted. If I did know, shame on me!

Who's the nicest person you've ever worked with?

1999 *Anne-Marie Duff.*

2006 Most people in this industry are nice. There are a few absolute, utter wankers, but they stand out because of their rarity. 94.6% of people are great to be around, so I think it would be churlish to choose just one... he sidestepped!

What would you advertise without a fee?

1999 *A charity I believed in. Or Honeynut Shredded Wheat.*

2006 Ah, I remember what I said back then – Honeynut Shredded Wheat – because myself and my partner at the time were very keen on them, and we were hoping for some free boxes... that never arrived, so they're not getting a credit this time. [Laughs] I wouldn't advertise anything without a fee now, unless it was some charitable organisation. I'm far too mercenary. The truth is, you only do adverts because you need to pay the rent. You don't do adverts for your art.

What would you never advertise?

1999 *The Conservative Party. Or McDonalds.*

2006 Political organisations that I disagreed with.

What wakes you up screaming at four in the morning?

1999 *The upstairs boiler overflow pipe dripping outside my window.*

2006 Oh, everything. Lots of things. It's only ever my own head – I have a propensity to worry about stuff. If it worms its way in there, it can wake me up at all hours. It's usually something that I really shouldn't be worrying about. The important things, I tend to sleep through. I'm sure a therapist could tell me why. When there's something big, something little will wake me up screaming in the night.

What takes you to a 'happy place'?

1999 *The number 91 bus.*

2006 Did I say the number 91 bus? That's still the crass, limply witty answer that pops into my head! I'm probably happiest when I'm working, and it's going well – when I'm nailing a scene. That's terrible, isn't it? How work-obsessed is that?

malleable the character can be – the show doesn't disappear in a puff of smoke if the Doctor does things that apparently he's never done before. It's not the end of the series if he snogs Madame de Pompadour. I'm interested in how we can push that – not necessarily sexually, but in other aspects as well. How can we tweak at the corners of the established myth without pulling it apart? How much is there still to discover before we create stuff that doesn't have a place to be there?

"There are a couple of things like that," he continues, "coming up in Series Three. You think, 'I can't see how that'll work,' and I'd have panicked at that this time last year, but now I'm thinking, 'Bring it on!' It seems to me that the Doctor is all things at once, and that's part of what makes him fascinating, and kind of indefinable. He can turn on a sixpence. He has absolute moral certainty – he knows when he's right. At the same time, he likes having a laugh, and likes duping people..."

Sounds a bit like Patrick Troughton's Doctor. "Well, Troughton played the Doctor as a clown, but a clown who had steel in him, and maybe I've picked up on that? I mean, I haven't sat down and gone, 'Ooh, why did Troughton work so well? Let's steal his ideas!'"

"WE'RE VERY **LUCKY** BEING ON A SHOW THAT PEOPLE WANT TO COME AND **GUEST-STAR IN** – NOT THAT WE HAVEN'T BEEN **TURNED DOWN** AT TIMES..."

I ask David how he approaches his work, and he muses for a moment, eventually admitting: "I get very involved in what I do." Is he a method actor? "What does that mean, though?" Do you 'become' the character? "In the moment," he considers, "you become it entirely, hopefully, but all the time there's an artifice to what you're doing, cos that's what acting is – you're remembering a sequence of lines, or you're reacting to a situation that's inherently false. The fashionable answer is to say that you become it 100%, but actually that can never be true. I can't become a Time Lord, not literally. But I take it very seriously, I think. That's my method."

When he's alone in his trailer, does David practice his action-hero poses in front of the mirror? Or open the fridge door with his sonic screwdriver? "Well, I do," he says, clearing his throat, "but purely professionally, just to see how to make the scene work better. So I don't really know what you can possibly be implying..." Does he act out adventures using his *Doctor Who* action figures? "Julie Gardner told me that you asked her this question," he chuckles, "and she didn't even understand the concept! She couldn't get what you were grasping at. But that's cos she's a girl. I'd certainly encourage anyone to get them out of the packet – that's what they're for, isn't it? Or buy two – keep one, and get the other one out of the packet. There are two – no, three – different versions of me now, and I wouldn't say that I've played with them all, but I did take one out, and put it on the shelf..." He nods towards the models of the Doctor, Rose, K9, and Chip on his shelf. "It's hard to resist trying a few poses," he confesses, "just to see what they look like. I haven't made up any fictional adventures yet. But I'm not saying I won't."

Does David ever suggest stories or casting ideas to the production team? "I don't think that's my job. I might do if the writing was rubbish, and I felt that we needed help, but I think we're in safe hands. I'm not going to say, 'I think we should have the Sontarans in Episode 7,' because I want to hear where Russell and the team want to take it. I've tried several times to get acting mates into the show, but every suggestion that I've made has been ignored. Presumably the powers-that-be are laughing about me somewhere in a little room, so I've given up making casting suggestions now! I think we're lucky that we're on a show that people want to come and guest in... not that we haven't been turned down. It's surprising sometimes who turns you down." Erm – such as? "No, I can't say." What are their initials? "KC." He grins. "Actually, that wasn't surprising; it was surprising that we *asked* them. It's always fun when you hear who's been cast in the next block. We've some brilliant actors coming into Series Three."

Furthermore, David has a new costume for the next series – and it's blue! He tried it on for the first time earlier today. "I was always quite keen that, if I did a second year, I'd have a different suit," he explains. "We're not dumping the old one; we're just adding a new one ▶

◀ *Opposite: A thrilling finale for Series Two.*

▲ *Above: Director Graeme Harper on set for **Army of Ghosts** with Camille Coduri (Jackie) and David Tennant.*

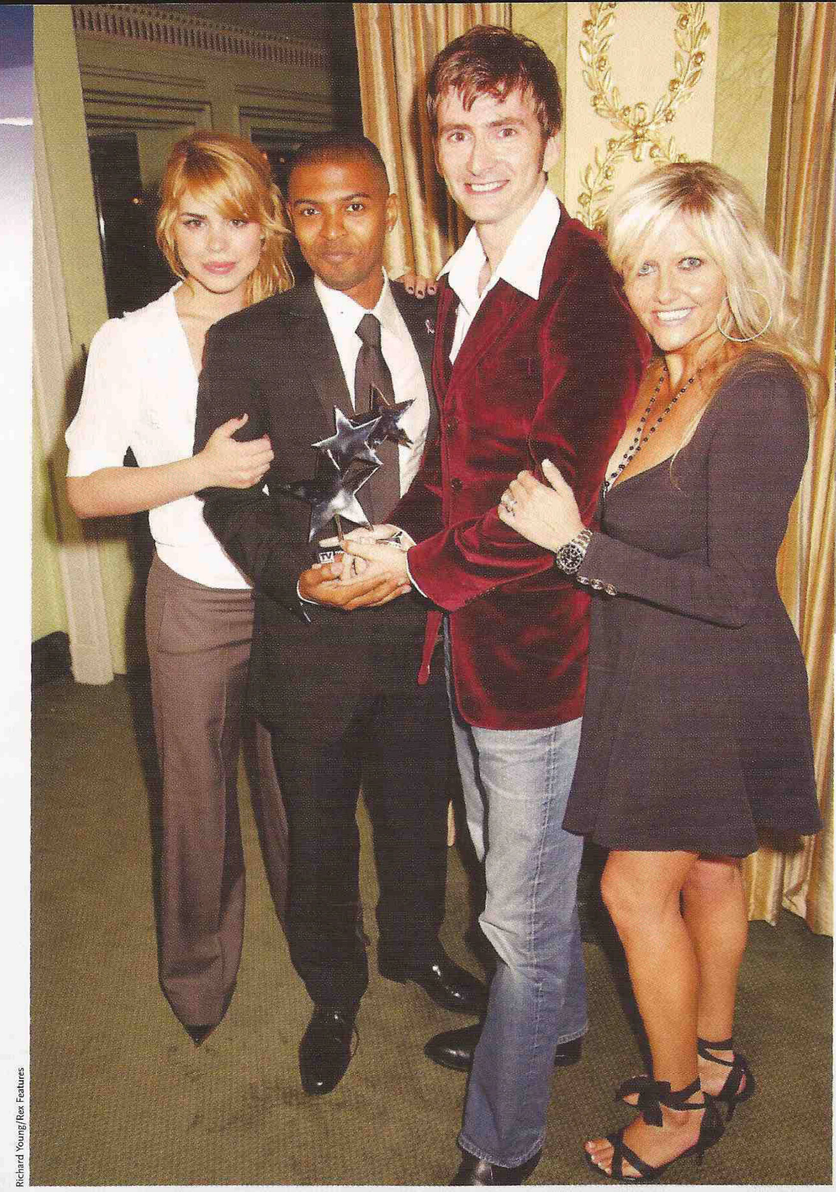
◀ *David in action figure form!*

▼ *Below: Shhh! You know Who saves the Olympic Games in **Fear Her**.*

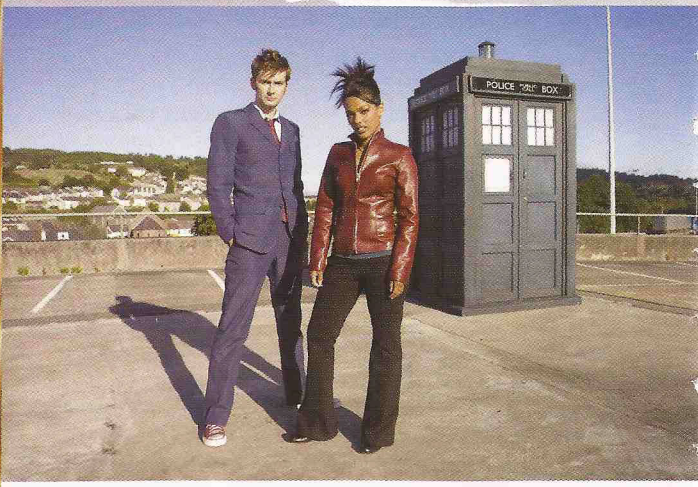
– he's a force of nature. I was a huge fan, so it was a real thrill to meet him, and work with him, albeit briefly. There's a bit that they cut from *Blue Peter*, funnily enough, where young William [Grantham, the nine-year-old winner of the 'Design a Monster' competition] was looking into the TARDIS – the gag being that Peter, and I, and him were pointing out things inside the TARDIS – and I was trying to play along, saying, 'That's the gravitic anomaliser, and that's the high-energy proton field,' when Peter blurted out: 'There you are, look – a football! Outdoor games, eh? You've never seen any of them before, have you?!'"

Fear Her

"It was great to work with Nina Sosanya [who



Richard Young/Rex Features



"I THINK I NOW KNOW HOW MANY SEASONS I'M GOING TO STAY FOR, BUT ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN..."

to the mix. I've always had a bit of a thing that whatever the Doctor wears should give him a distinctive look, and a silhouette that's recognisable, but should be clothes rather than a costume, just so that it doesn't look like he puts the same clothes on every day. That bothers me as a point of logic, really. As Julie Gardner said when we were discussing it: 'Isn't it true that once a bloke finds something that he likes, he just buys the same thing in six different colours?' – which is very true, and so we're pursuing that logic. It's a way of not having a uniform, while, at the same time, it absolutely *is* a uniform. I suppose we're trying to have our cake and eat it!

"My initial thought," he continues, "was that the new suit should be *really* different. Louise Page [costume designer] was sent off to find something, none of us really knowing what we were asking her to find, and she came back with a material that's almost a negative of the brown suit – it's blue with rusty red stripes through it. In every other way, it's the same – it's basically the same cut. At first, I was a bit, 'Oh no, Louise, that's not the point! The point is that it's a *different* suit. It's got to be different, but still the same,' which is, of course, a pointless and useless note. To be fair, Russell was on my side, but we were both wrong, and Louise was right. She talked us all round, insisting that actually she knows what she's doing, which, of course, she does. The blue suit is different – there's something fresh about it – but it's still the same basic image."

And are you keeping the sideburns for Series Three?

"I like the sideburns," he nods. "They give me something to stroke in times of stress. Why, do you not like them?"

I love them. I think you should grow a moustache to match.

"A moustache is different. You'd get bits of food stuck in your moustache. You don't get much food stuck in your sideburns... unless you're a *very* messy eater."

Interestingly, David is the first actor to play the Doctor in an accent that's not his own. "It's quite a big decision to make," he states, "but it's where Russell and Julie wanted to take it. Then again, what *is* this accent? I mean, we had this idea that he'd kind of picked up his accent from Rose, but that line got cut, so we don't even need to stick to that. If I've got enough time, and with help from a dialect coach, I can do most accents. But it's not like I'm trying to nail a specific accent, because the Doctor is an alien, so it can kind of be whatever it is. If a bit of Scottish comes through now and again, that's fine."

David is vehemently proud of his Scottishness. He wore a kilt to this year's BAFTA ceremony. How far does he feel that his heritage defines who he is? "It's something that you're given for free, isn't it?" he says. "I am proud to be Scottish, but it's not something that I was conscious of until I moved away, which I think is true of a lot of ex-pats of whatever nation. It's only once I'd lived in London that I started becoming in any sense a Scottish nationalist – not that I'm an SNP voter, but nationalist without a capital 'n'. I'd regard myself as Scottish first, and British second, I suppose."

played Trish, and had appeared opposite David in *Casanova*] again. Also, filming the climax in the Millennium Stadium – actually on the pitch! – when it was totally empty, which was a slightly spooky experience, because it's so vast, and yet it seems rather wee when it's empty. It was an brilliantly creepy and different script – really exciting to do something in a mostly mundane location, a suburban avenue, and have Euros make it so extraordinary."

Army of Ghosts/ Doomsday

"They were the scripts that were most affecting when I read them, for obvious reasons, but also for kind of televisual history reasons – with the whole Dalek/Cybermen

David was born in Bathgate, West Lothian, but grew up in Ralston, Renfrewshire. He has one brother, and one sister, both older, but claims that he was "quite a loner as a kid." He describes himself as a "tortured" teenager, but adds: "That's the nature of being a teenager. It felt awkward, and ugly, and difficult. I felt uncool to the depths of my soul, and I've never really recovered from that – I still think I'm uncool. Everyone else seemed to have sorted out where they stood in the world, and I just couldn't seem to. I felt like I was busking, and running to catch up with everyone else. But I still feel like that, if I'm honest. That sensation has never really gone away. It was worse as a teenager, and you gain a certain amount of awareness as you grow older, and the self-consciousness recedes, but not quite as much as you would hope. I'm still sort of busking until somebody finds me out."

David is famously reluctant to discuss his private life in interviews. He seems comfortable chatting about most things, but not, say, his love life. But this is **DWM**. Nothing is off-limits. Especially if it's about *Doctor Who*! So, um, David, apropos of nothing, how did you enjoy working with *The Girl in the Fireplace* guest star Sophia Myles...?

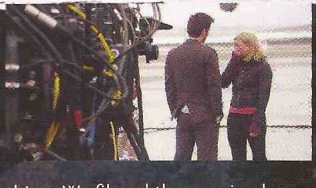
"She was great, yeah. She's very good." He flashes a grin. "She's a very good actress." What were your first impressions of her? "We had met once before," he reveals, "on [ITV drama] *Foyle's War*, but she didn't remember. I thought she was a bit frosty on that, to be honest, so I was a bit nervous when I knew that she was coming on to *Doctor Who*, 'cos that had been my only experience of her! But she turned out to be a top lass." Do you consider yourselves as the Posh and Becks of *Doctor Who*? "I don't know what you're talking about," he splutters, exploding with laughter. "Is that how you see us? Well, fine. But only if I get to be Posh!"

And here's the $64-million question: would David like to sign up to film a third series? "It's a funny question, that, isn't it? As soon as I accepted this job, the first question I got asked was, 'How long are you staying?' It's difficult to judge, because there's an element of being in a long-running show that's a gamble, because I am 35 now, and if I stayed in this for as long as it was humanly possible, I'd still have to have some kind of a career at the other end of it, so it's judging when is the right moment to go. I think I now know how many series I'm going to do, and Russell, Julie, and I have talked about it, and will continue to talk about it, but I think it would be stupid of me to say more than that right now, before *this* series has even begun filming. Anything can happen, and everything can change."

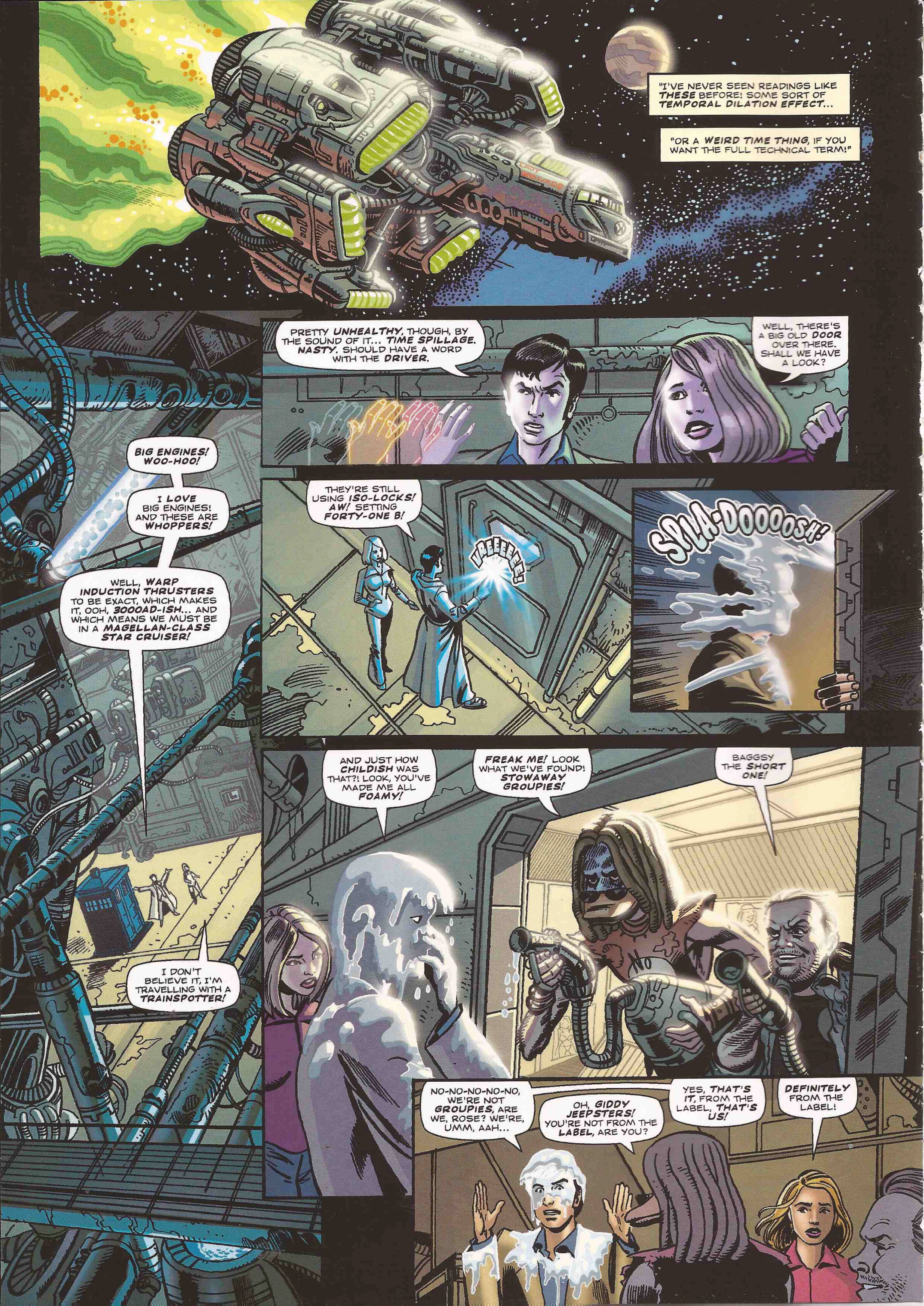
As our time together draws to a close, I ask David whether he worries that his life might never be quite *this* good again. His answer is surprisingly candid: "I'm keenly aware, all the time, of in some way failing, and that feeling never goes away, or lets me quite enjoy it as much as I should. With hindsight I'll probably wonder why I didn't. But that's a good thing, because you've got to keep striving. If you just went, 'Yeah, the show's doing really well, people love it, we're getting huge viewing figures, let's just enjoy it,' then it'd fall apart, wouldn't it? I think it's good that we all get twitchy about it, and that we're all nervous it's going to fall apart at any moment. It keeps us on our toes."

Opposite left: Billie, Noel Clarke, David and Camille collect the TV Quick TV Choice award back in September.

Opposite right: The Tenth Doctor and new companion Martha (Freema Agyeman) gear up for new adventures!

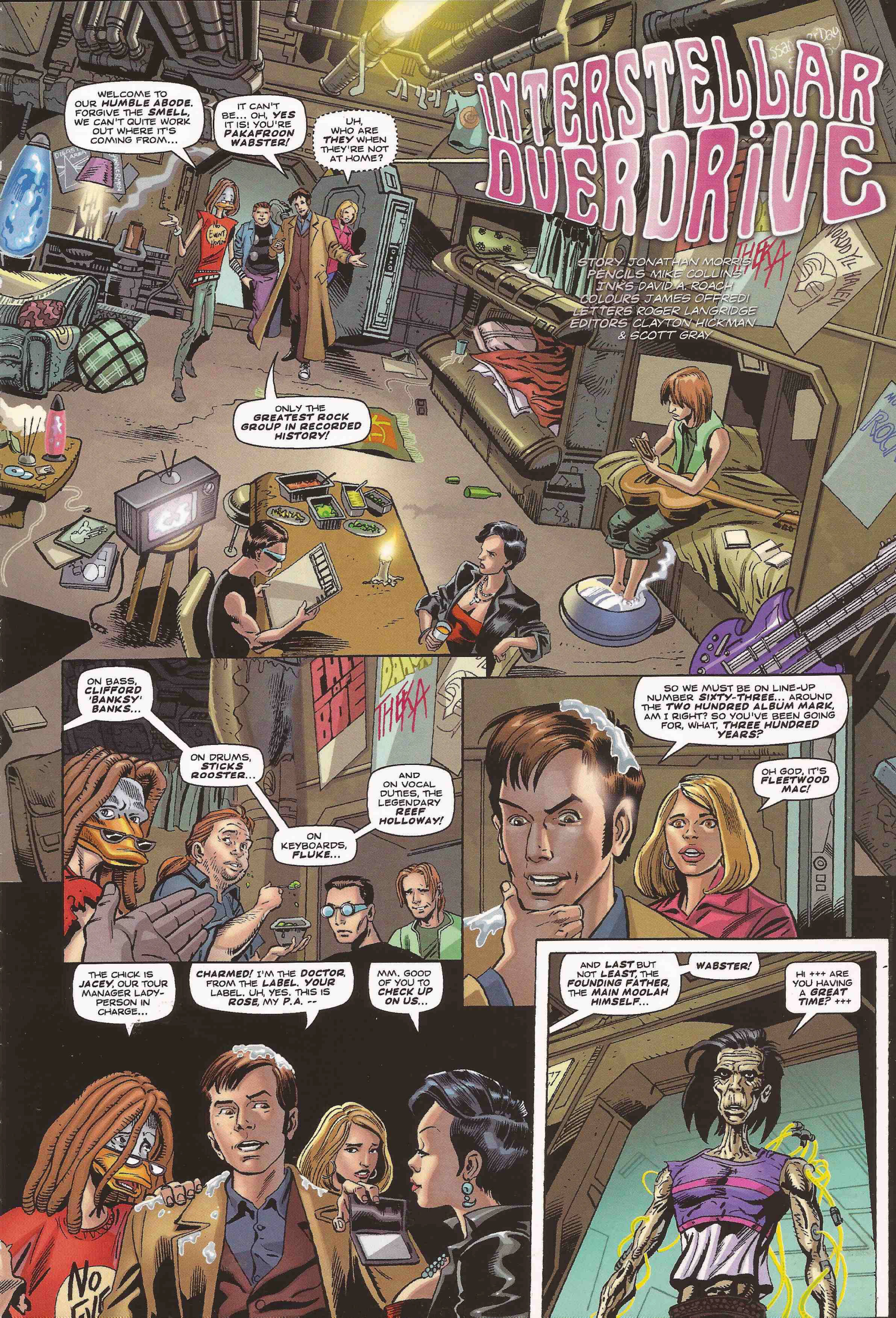


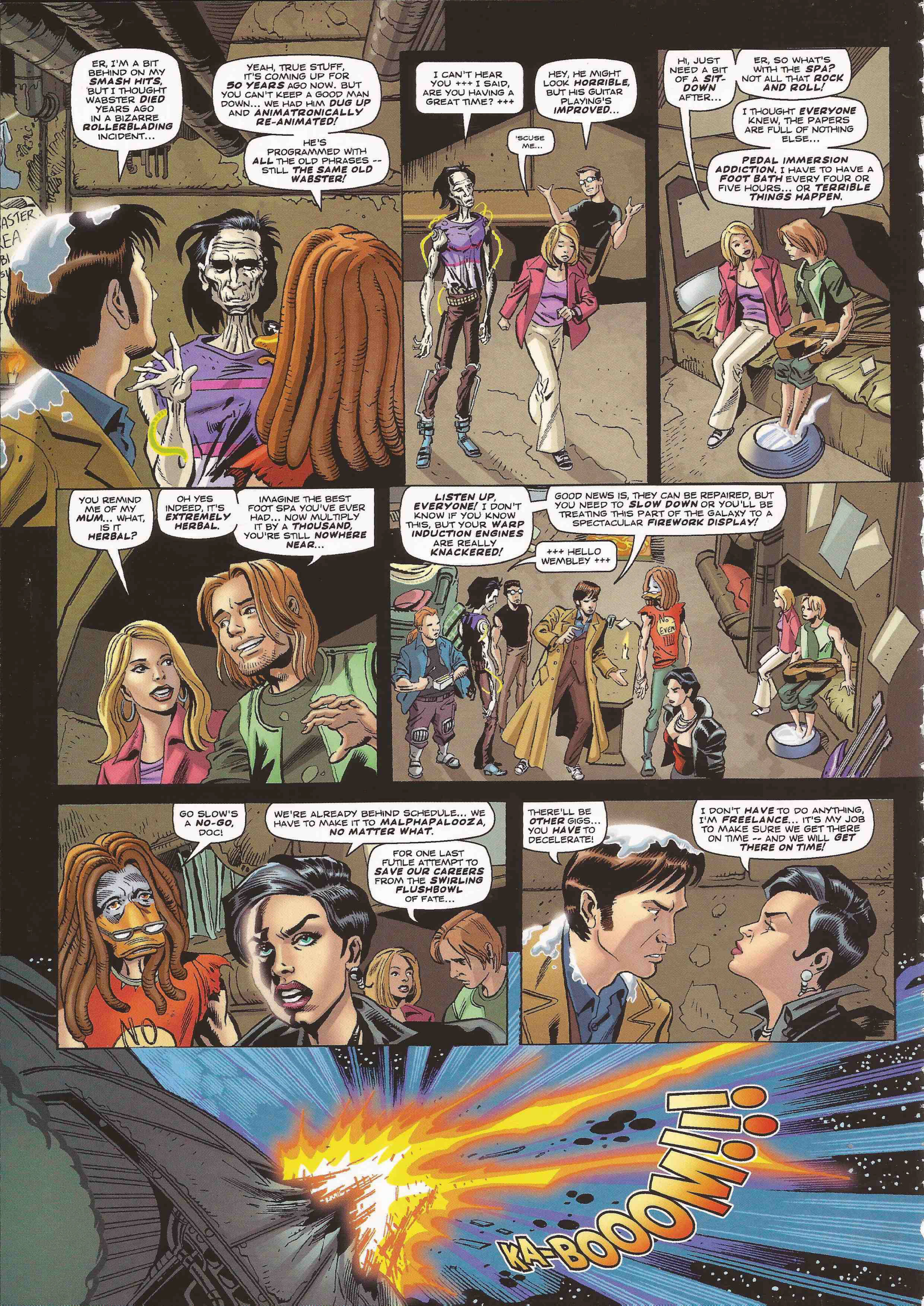
thing. We filmed those episodes in the middle of the run, rather than at the end, so it was all out of sequence, which is just as well, because it was upsetting enough, really, to film those final scenes. If we'd have done them actually at the end of Billie's time on the show, I think we might have lost the plot."

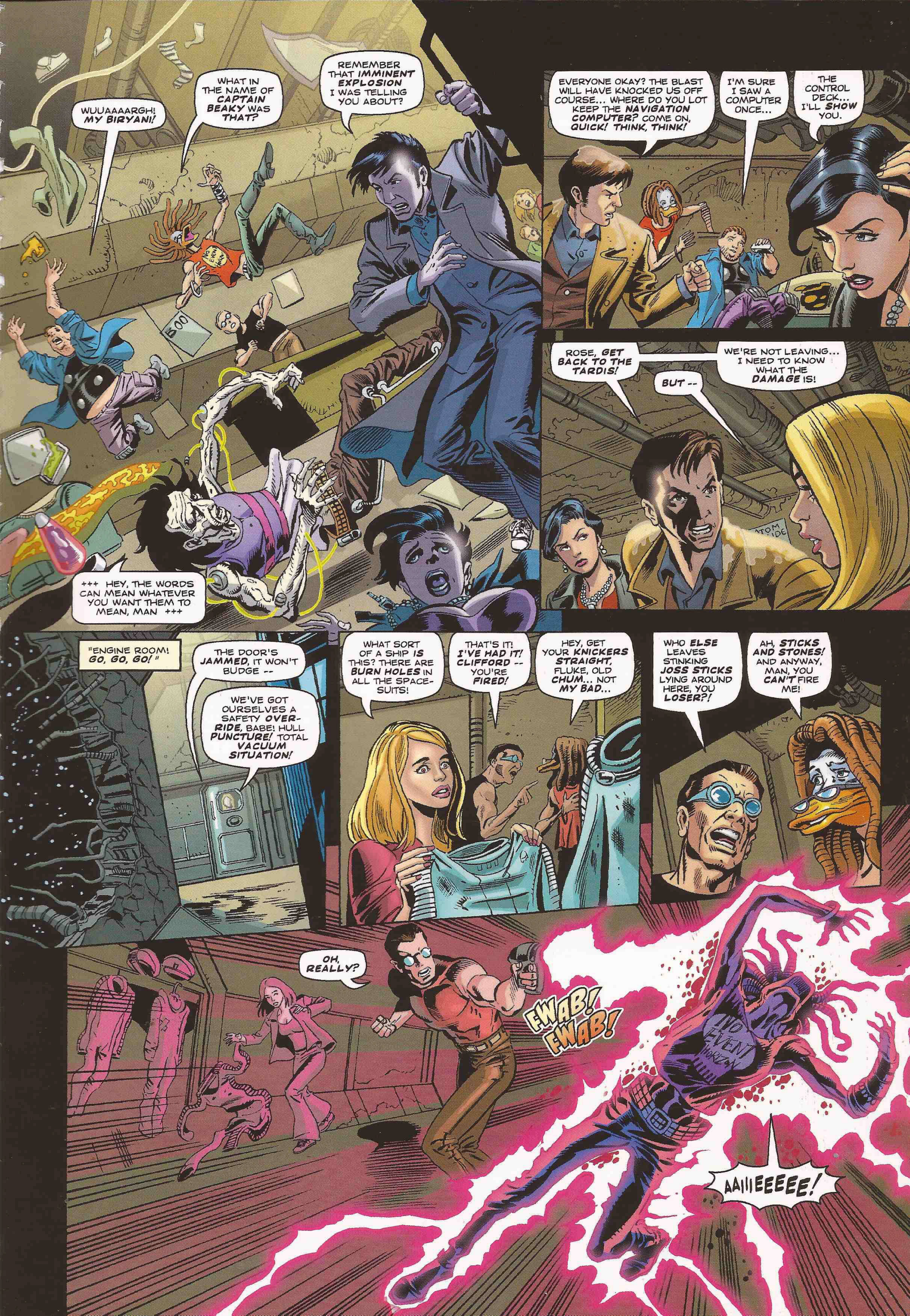

"I'VE NEVER SEEN READINGS LIKE *THESE* BEFORE! SOME SORT OF *TEMPORAL DILATION EFFECT*...
"OR A *WEIRD TIME THING*, IF YOU WANT THE FULL TECHNICAL TERM!"
BIG ENGINES! WOO-HOO!
I *LOVE* BIG ENGINES! AND THESE ARE *WHOPPERS!*
WELL, *WARP INDUCTION THRUSTERS* TO BE EXACT, WHICH MAKES IT, OOH, *3000AD-ISH*... AND WHICH MEANS WE MUST BE IN A *MAGELLAN-CLASS STAR CRUISER!*
I DON'T BELIEVE IT, I'M TRAVELLING WITH A *TRAINSPOTTER!*
PRETTY *UNHEALTHY*, THOUGH, BY THE SOUND OF IT... *TIME SPILLAGE. NASTY.* SHOULD HAVE A WORD WITH THE *DRIVER.*
WELL, THERE'S A BIG OLD *DOOR* OVER THERE. SHALL WE HAVE A LOOK?
THEY'RE STILL USING *ISO-LOCKS! AW!* SETTING *FORTY-ONE B!*
VREEEEE!
SPLA-DOOOOOSH!
AND JUST HOW *CHILDISH* WAS THAT?! LOOK, YOU'VE MADE ME ALL *FOAMY!*
FREAK ME! LOOK WHAT WE'VE FOUND! *STOWAWAY GROUPIES!*
BAGGSY THE *SHORT ONE!*
NO-NO-NO-NO-NO, WE'RE NOT *GROUPIES*, ARE WE, ROSE? WE'RE, UMM, AAH...
OH, *GIDDY JEEPSTERS!* YOU'RE NOT FROM THE *LABEL*, ARE YOU?
YES, *THAT'S IT*, FROM THE LABEL, *THAT'S US!*
DEFINITELY FROM THE LABEL!

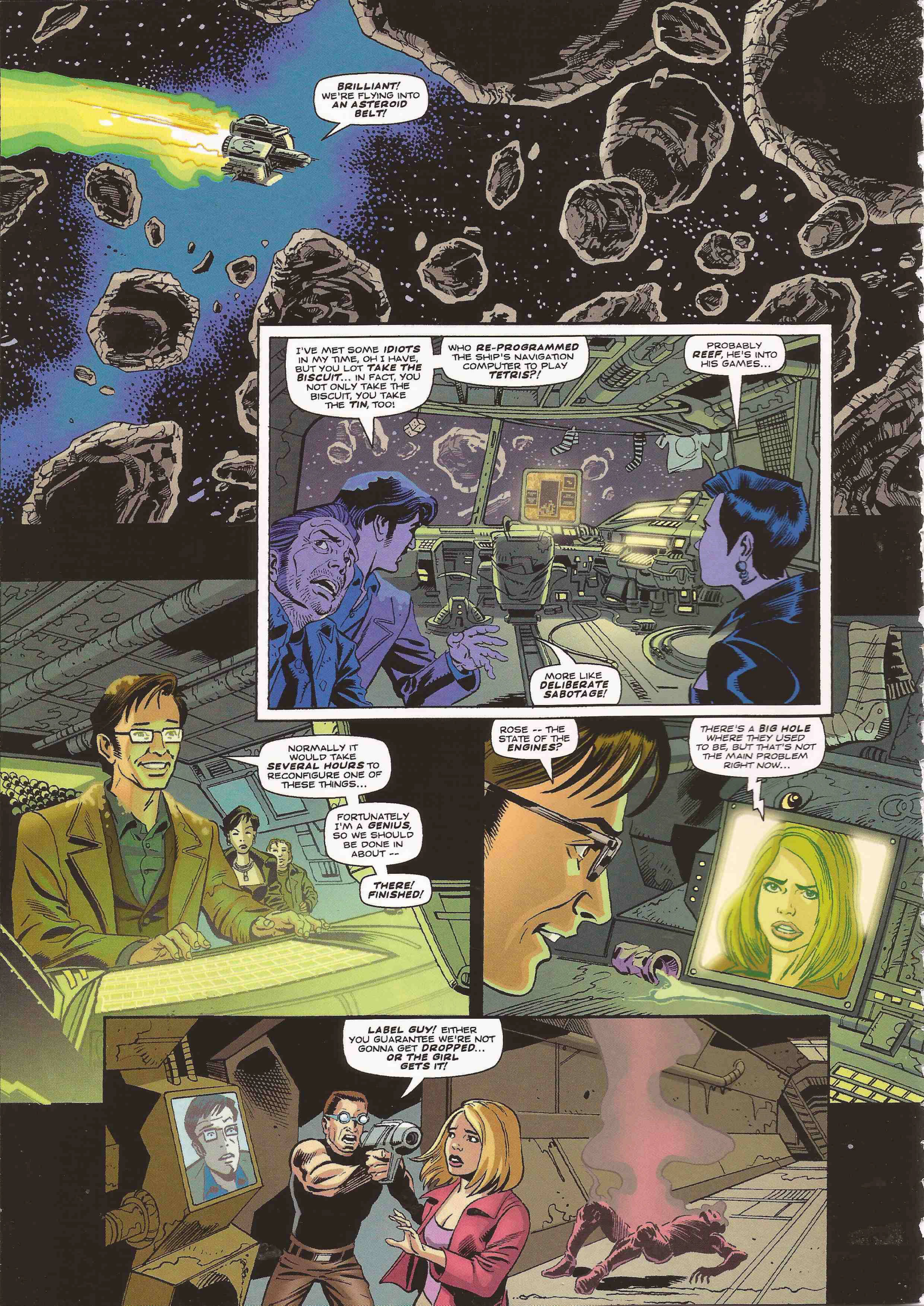
INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE

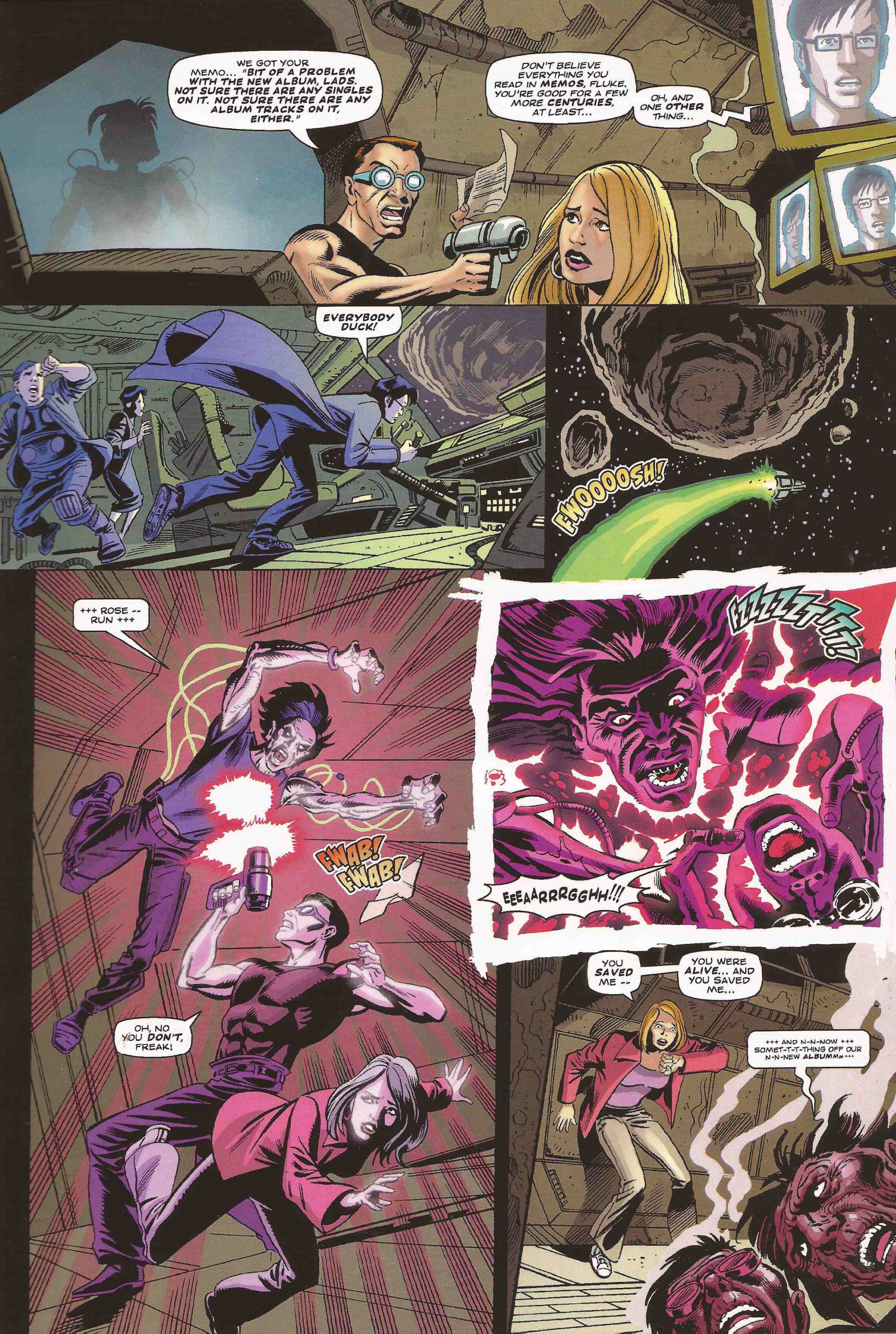
STORY JONATHAN MORRIS
PENCILS MIKE COLLINS
INKS DAVID A. ROACH
COLOURS JAMES OFFREDI
LETTERS ROGER LANGRIDGE
EDITORS CLAYTON HICKMAN
& SCOTT GRAY

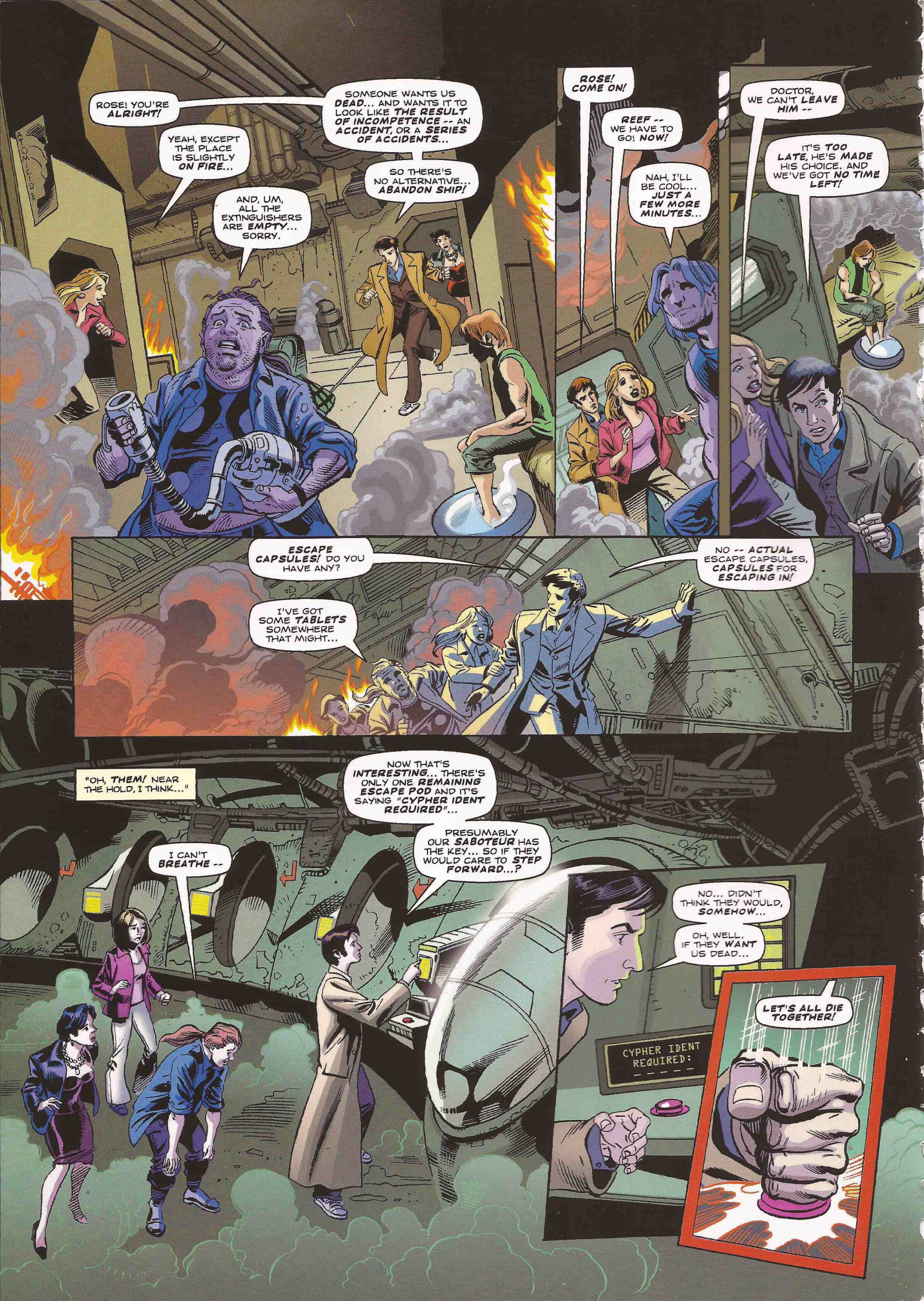

WELCOME TO OUR HUMBLE ABODE. FORGIVE THE SMELL, WE CAN'T QUITE WORK OUT WHERE IT'S COMING FROM...
IT CAN'T BE... OH, YES IT IS! YOU'RE PAKAFROON WABSTER!
UH, WHO ARE THEY WHEN THEY'RE NOT AT HOME?
ONLY THE GREATEST ROCK GROUP IN RECORDED HISTORY!
THEKA
ON BASS, CLIFFORD 'BANKSY' BANKS...
ON DRUMS, STICKS ROOSTER...
ON KEYBOARDS, FLUKE...
AND ON VOCAL DUTIES, THE LEGENDARY REEF HOLLOWAY!
SO WE MUST BE ON LINE-UP NUMBER SIXTY-THREE... AROUND THE TWO HUNDRED ALBUM MARK, AM I RIGHT? SO YOU'VE BEEN GOING FOR, WHAT, THREE HUNDRED YEARS?
OH GOD, IT'S FLEETWOOD MAC!
THE CHICK IS JACEY, OUR TOUR MANAGER LADY-PERSON IN CHARGE...
CHARMED! I'M THE DOCTOR, FROM THE LABEL. YOUR LABEL. UH, YES. THIS IS ROSE, MY P.A. --
MM. GOOD OF YOU TO CHECK UP ON US...
AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THE FOUNDING FATHER, THE MAIN MOOLAH HIMSELF...
WABSTER!
HI +++ ARE YOU HAVING A GREAT TIME? +++

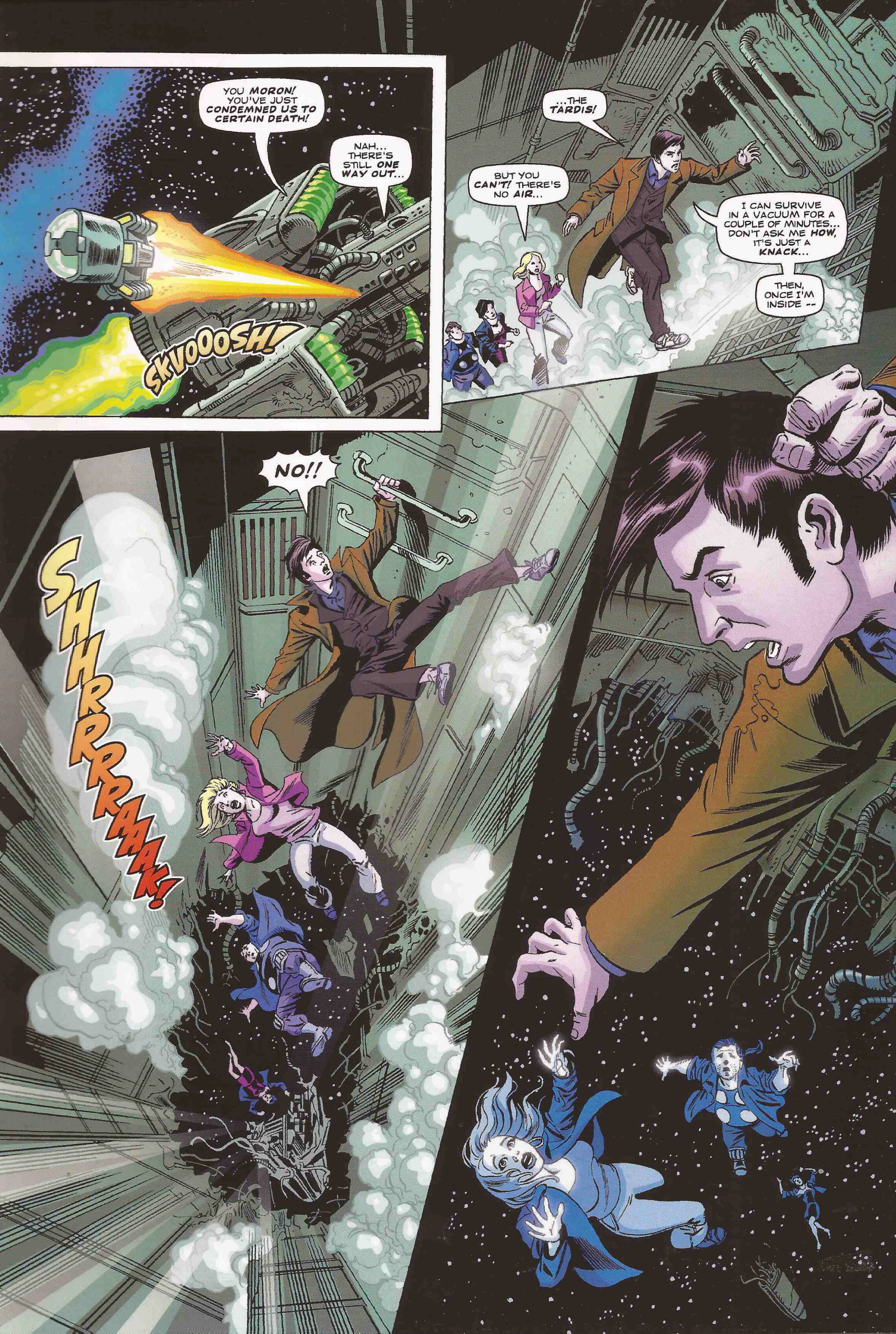

ER, I'M A BIT BEHIND ON MY SMASH HITS, BUT I THOUGHT WABSTER DIED YEARS AGO IN A BIZARRE ROLLERBLADING INCIDENT...
YEAH, TRUE STUFF, IT'S COMING UP FOR 50 YEARS AGO NOW. BUT YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD MAN DOWN... WE HAD HIM DUG UP AND ANIMATRONICALLY RE-ANIMATED!
HE'S PROGRAMMED WITH ALL THE OLD PHRASES -- STILL THE SAME OLD WABSTER!
I CAN'T HEAR YOU +++ I SAID, ARE YOU HAVING A GREAT TIME? +++
HEY, HE MIGHT LOOK HORRIBLE, BUT HIS GUITAR PLAYING'S IMPROVED...
'SCUSE ME...
HI, JUST NEED A BIT OF A SIT-DOWN AFTER...
ER, SO WHAT'S WITH THE SPA? NOT ALL THAT ROCK AND ROLL!
I THOUGHT EVERYONE KNEW, THE PAPERS ARE FULL OF NOTHING ELSE...
PEDAL IMMERSION ADDICTION. I HAVE TO HAVE A FOOT BATH EVERY FOUR OR FIVE HOURS... OR TERRIBLE THINGS HAPPEN.
YOU REMIND ME OF MY MUM... WHAT, IS IT HERBAL?
OH YES INDEED, IT'S EXTREMELY HERBAL.
IMAGINE THE BEST FOOT SPA YOU'VE EVER HAD... NOW MULTIPLY IT BY A THOUSAND, YOU'RE STILL NOWHERE NEAR...
LISTEN UP, EVERYONE! I DON'T KNOW IF YOU KNOW THIS, BUT YOUR WARP INDUCTION ENGINES ARE REALLY KNACKERED!
GOOD NEWS IS, THEY CAN BE REPAIRED, BUT YOU NEED TO SLOW DOWN OR YOU'LL BE TREATING THIS PART OF THE GALAXY TO A SPECTACULAR FIREWORK DISPLAY!
+++ HELLO WEMBLEY +++
NO EVEN
GO SLOW'S A NO-GO, DOC!
WE'RE ALREADY BEHIND SCHEDULE... WE HAVE TO MAKE IT TO MALPHAPALOOZA, NO MATTER WHAT.
FOR ONE LAST FUTILE ATTEMPT TO SAVE OUR CAREERS FROM THE SWIRLING FLUSHBOWL OF FATE...
NO
THERE'LL BE OTHER GIGS... YOU HAVE TO DECELERATE!
I DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING, I'M FREELANCE... IT'S MY JOB TO MAKE SURE WE GET THERE ON TIME -- AND WE WILL GET THERE ON TIME!
KA-BOOOM!!!!

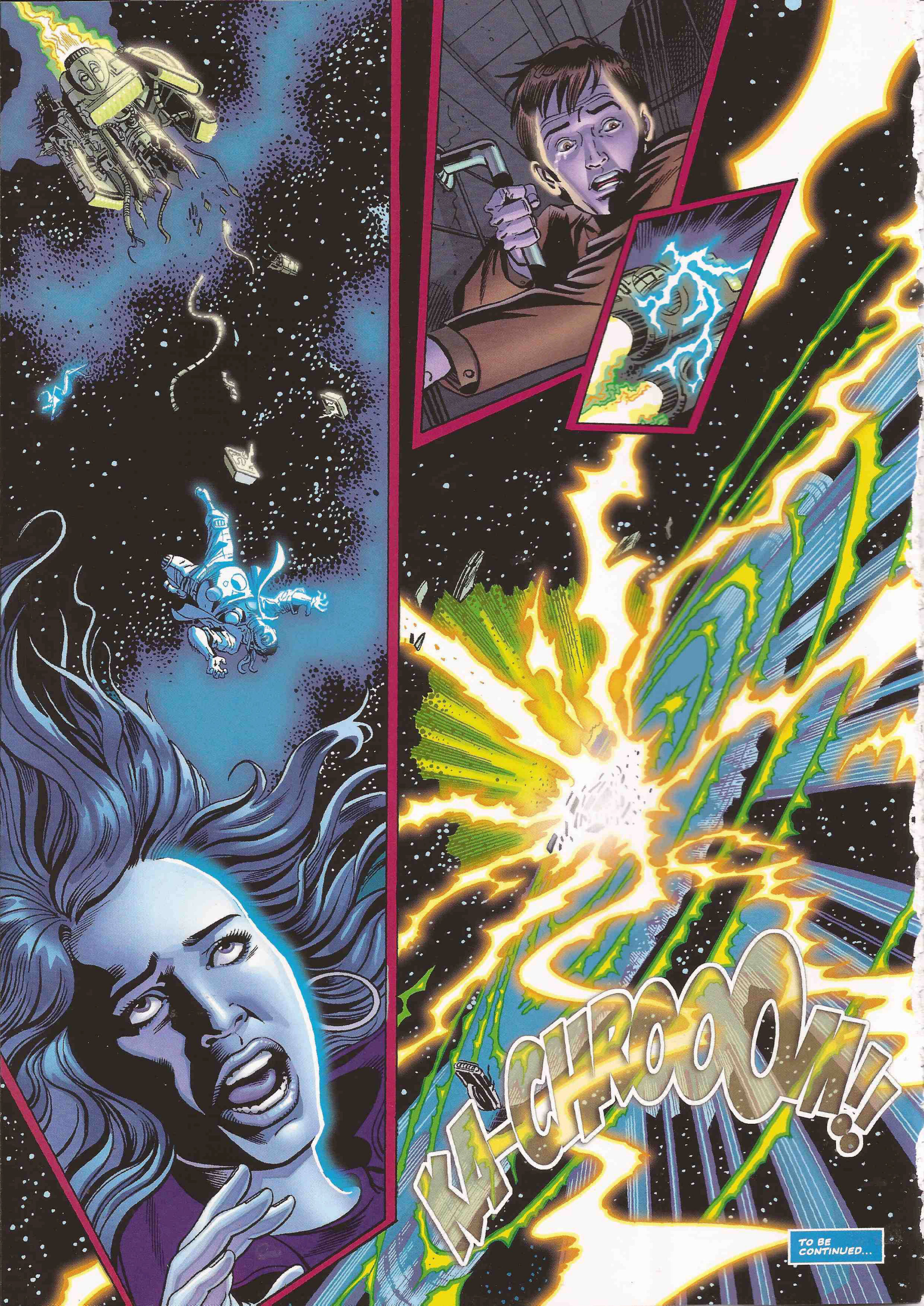

WUUAAAARGH! MY BIRYANI!
WHAT IN THE NAME OF CAPTAIN BEAKY WAS THAT?
REMEMBER THAT IMMINENT EXPLOSION I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT?
+++ HEY, THE WORDS CAN MEAN WHATEVER YOU WANT THEM TO MEAN, MAN +++
EVERYONE OKAY? THE BLAST WILL HAVE KNOCKED US OFF COURSE... WHERE DO YOU LOT KEEP THE NAVIGATION COMPUTER? COME ON, QUICK! THINK, THINK!
I'M SURE I SAW A COMPUTER ONCE...
THE CONTROL DECK... I'LL SHOW YOU.
ROSE, GET BACK TO THE TARDIS!
BUT --
WE'RE NOT LEAVING... I NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE DAMAGE IS!
"ENGINE ROOM! GO, GO, GO!"
THE DOOR'S JAMMED, IT WON'T BUDGE --
WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A SAFETY OVER-RIDE, BABE! HULL PUNCTURE! TOTAL VACUUM SITUATION!
WHAT SORT OF A SHIP IS THIS? THERE ARE BURN HOLES IN ALL THE SPACE-SUITS!
THAT'S IT! I'VE HAD IT! CLIFFORD -- YOU'RE FIRED!
HEY, GET YOUR KNICKERS STRAIGHT, FLUKE, OLD CHUM... NOT MY BAD...
WHO ELSE LEAVES STINKING JOSS STICKS LYING AROUND HERE, YOU LOSER?!
AH, STICKS AND STONES! AND ANYWAY, MAN, YOU CAN'T FIRE ME!
OH, REALLY?
FWAB! FWAB!
AAIIIEEEEE!


BRILLIANT! WE'RE FLYING INTO AN ASTEROID BELT!
I'VE MET SOME IDIOTS IN MY TIME, OH I HAVE, BUT YOU LOT TAKE THE BISCUIT... IN FACT, YOU NOT ONLY TAKE THE BISCUIT, YOU TAKE THE TIN, TOO!
WHO RE-PROGRAMMED THE SHIP'S NAVIGATION COMPUTER TO PLAY TETRIS?!
PROBABLY REEF, HE'S INTO HIS GAMES...
MORE LIKE DELIBERATE SABOTAGE!
NORMALLY IT WOULD TAKE SEVERAL HOURS TO RECONFIGURE ONE OF THESE THINGS...
FORTUNATELY I'M A GENIUS, SO WE SHOULD BE DONE IN ABOUT --
THERE! FINISHED!
ROSE -- THE STATE OF THE ENGINES?
THERE'S A BIG HOLE WHERE THEY USED TO BE, BUT THAT'S NOT THE MAIN PROBLEM RIGHT NOW...
LABEL GUY! EITHER YOU GUARANTEE WE'RE NOT GONNA GET DROPPED... OR THE GIRL GETS IT!


WE GOT YOUR MEMO... "BIT OF A PROBLEM WITH THE NEW ALBUM, LADS. NOT SURE THERE ARE ANY SINGLES ON IT. NOT SURE THERE ARE ANY ALBUM TRACKS ON IT, EITHER."
DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ IN MEMOS, FLUKE. YOU'RE GOOD FOR A FEW MORE CENTURIES, AT LEAST...
OH, AND ONE OTHER THING...
EVERYBODY DUCK!
FWOOOOSH!
+++ ROSE -- RUN +++
FWAB! FWAB!
OH, NO YOU DON'T, FREAK!
FZZZZTTTT!!
EEEAARRRGGHH!!!
YOU SAVED ME --
YOU WERE ALIVE... AND YOU SAVED ME...
+++ AND N-N-NOW +++ SOMET-T-T-THING OFF OUR N-N-NEW ALBUMMM +++


ROSE! YOU'RE ALRIGHT!
YEAH, EXCEPT THE PLACE IS SLIGHTLY ON FIRE...
AND, UM, ALL THE EXTINGUISHERS ARE EMPTY... SORRY.
SOMEONE WANTS US DEAD... AND WANTS IT TO LOOK LIKE THE RESULT OF INCOMPETENCE -- AN ACCIDENT, OR A SERIES OF ACCIDENTS...
SO THERE'S NO ALTERNATIVE... ABANDON SHIP!
ATOMICIDE
ROSE! COME ON!
REEF -- WE HAVE TO GO! NOW!
NAH, I'LL BE COOL... JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES...
DOCTOR, WE CAN'T LEAVE HIM --
IT'S TOO LATE, HE'S MADE HIS CHOICE. AND WE'VE GOT NO TIME LEFT!
ESCAPE CAPSULES! DO YOU HAVE ANY?
I'VE GOT SOME TABLETS SOMEWHERE THAT MIGHT...
NO -- ACTUAL ESCAPE CAPSULES, CAPSULES FOR ESCAPING IN!
"OH, THEM! NEAR THE HOLD, I THINK..."
NOW THAT'S INTERESTING... THERE'S ONLY ONE REMAINING ESCAPE POD AND IT'S SAYING "CYPHER IDENT REQUIRED"...
PRESUMABLY OUR SABOTEUR HAS THE KEY... SO IF THEY WOULD CARE TO STEP FORWARD...?
I CAN'T BREATHE --
NO... DIDN'T THINK THEY WOULD, SOMEHOW...
OH, WELL. IF THEY WANT US DEAD...
CYPHER IDENT REQUIRED: _ _ _ _ _
LET'S ALL DIE TOGETHER!


YOU MORON! YOU'VE JUST CONDEMNED US TO CERTAIN DEATH!
NAH... THERE'S STILL ONE WAY OUT...
SKVOOOSH!
...THE TARDIS!
BUT YOU CAN'T! THERE'S NO AIR...
I CAN SURVIVE IN A VACUUM FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES... DON'T ASK ME HOW, IT'S JUST A KNACK...
THEN, ONCE I'M INSIDE --
NO!!
SHHRRRAAAK!


KA-CHROOOM!!
TO BE CONTINUED...

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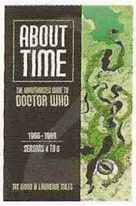

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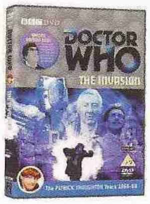

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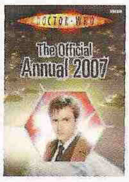

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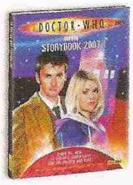

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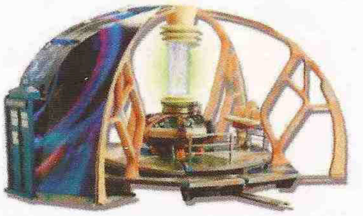

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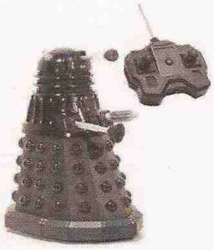

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BBC 7 **Preview**

Radio Time!

New Year's Eve sees the start of a whole new set of adventures for the Eighth Doctor – on BBC7 radio. **Mark Wyman** speaks to the producers, directors and stars to find out more about these audio voyages through time and space...

Photography by **Barnaby Edwards**

▲ *Sheridan Smith as new companion Lucie Miller, alongside the son of Doctor Who – Jake McGann!*

"Working on these is usually mayhem in space," says Paul McGann, halfway through an intensive week's recording of six new stories for radio featuring his Eighth Doctor. Since his one hour of screen time in the 1996 *Doctor Who* TV Movie, McGann has appeared in around 50 hours of audio dramas released by Big Finish, plus the animated BBC webcast of *Shada*. "It's a really good crop of scripts this week," declares McGann, "but they're not gentle or pastoral things. The energy and vitality involved means we really have to fly at them..."

But this crop is different. Although the fresh eight-part series, which involves eight days' recording in all, is again produced by Big Finish, it will be heard first on the digital network BBC7. The episodes, acquired for the Sunday evening *7th Dimension* slot on BBC7 (where earlier Eighth Doctor stories are currently being repeated) will commence on New Year's Eve.

Throughout one week in August, then, McGann is standing at the microphone to record a different story daily, alongside a guest cast of startling calibre that, for starters, includes Anita Dobson – who sets the tone on Day One by telling **DWM** excitedly, "I've just had my picture taken with a Dalek!" Frequently, there are two McGanns in the studio, with Paul's son Jake making his radio début in *Immortal Beloved*. Even more significantly, there's a new, highly spirited companion: Lucie Miller, the first time-travelling girl from northern England. She's played by Sheridan Smith. More on her later.

First, Paul McGann describes what goes on in the current Big Finish studio. "The physical studio experience? Picture a soundproofed room with a bunch of six vocal booths, wide enough for two people. The actors go into their respective booths and wave their arms furiously – with headphones on! – because if the script says 'running down corridor', you have to physically go through those motions. It must look funny, but it's generally just two or three takes before things are at a decent pitch and everyone's OK with it."

Having a new companion on board seems to have energised McGann for the week. "Yeah, I'm really enjoying myself, there's a good atmosphere, and this girl is *so* good. I thought Sheridan was talented when I met her four years ago on [ITV1 drama] *Blood Strangers*, but she's come here and made the transition seamless. Everything she does, you believe it. That's my kind of actor: no fuss, just dead on. She's fantastic, and seems to be having a hoot, which is the main thing."

What about his Doctor in these stories? "There's a more cantankerous, almost paranoid side coming out, and I've enjoyed that," McGann considers. "In yesterday's recording, for *Phobos*, he lost his rag a bit with Timothy West! We have laughs doing these, but I've always said that beside that great sense of fun in the Doctor, there's something angry in him too. You can imagine him lashing out when pushed. Actors look for tension – 'Where's that tightrope I can walk?' – I'm all for that."

For Big Finish, producers of licenced *Doctor Who* audio drama since 1999, these productions are their first to première on radio. Barring occasional webcasts, everything has emerged first on CD. The series' executive producers are Jason Haigh-Ellery and Nicholas Briggs, purveyor of Dalek voices (among others) to the universe. Haigh-Ellery directed one story before flying off to launch another audio series, *Dark Shadows*, but Briggs and his associate producer Barnaby Edwards (actor-director, photographer, Dalek operator) directed the remainder between them, and kindly allowed **DWM** exclusive access to each day's recording.

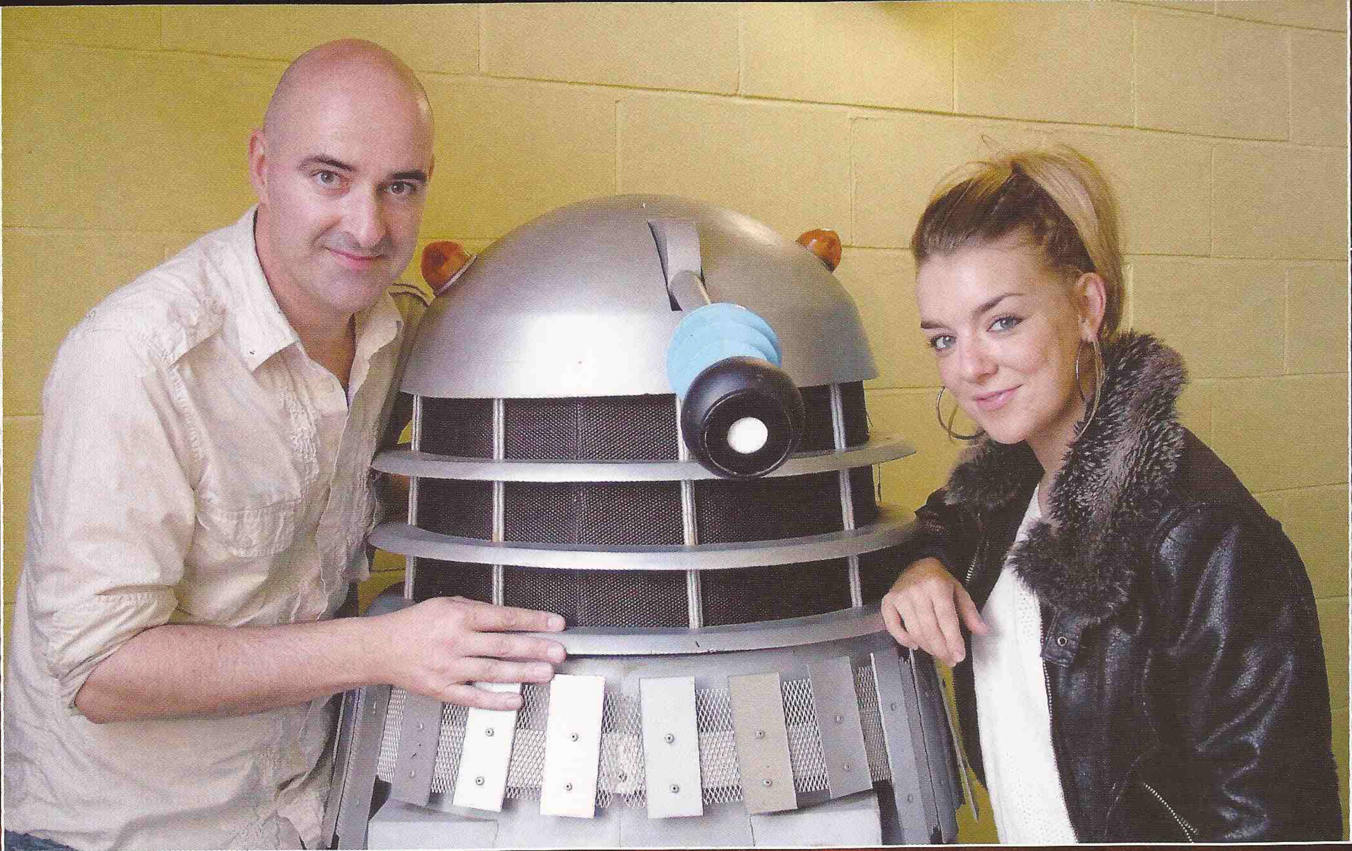
"I thought Sheridan was talented when I first met her four years ago. Everything she does, you believe it."

Paul McGann

▼ *The Eighth Doctor himself, Paul McGann, gets to grips with the deadly Daleks once more...*

On the one day when neither was directing in the studio, **DWM** sat the multi-tasking Briggs and Edwards down and asked: what sparked off this radio-first series? "Since BBC7 reran our older Paul McGann audios," Briggs explains, "our boss Jason Haigh-Ellery has been discussing doing some new ones. The previous broadcasts did well, so they've come back for more. Jason and BBC7 then devised a season of eight 50-minute episodes, and Alan Barnes – who wrote our very first audio with Paul, *Storm Warning* – also had a vital role, as the series script-editor."

"The initial idea," Briggs continues, "was to be more traditional than the recent McGann audios, yet more like the current TV series." It was also agreed early on to introduce a new companion for these adventures. Lucie Miller was conceived by Alan Barnes,



▲ *Voice of the Daleks and the Cybermen – and Big Finish executive producer – Nick Briggs introduces Sheridan to the Doctor's arch-enemies...*

who had also devised the Eighth Doctor's previous audio companion Charley Pollard.

During early spring discussions with BBC7, Gary Russell was still running the *Doctor Who* audio range, but Briggs recalls that "Gary didn't really have time to produce this season, so Jason offered it to me." When Briggs came aboard around Easter, "It was just after Gary and Alan had worked out who would be writing the scripts. I was presented with a two-part Dalek story and a two-part Cyberman story, and most of the surviving storylines inbetween. Alan was chiefly responsible for devising the character of Lucie," Briggs confirms, "after Jason had suggested a different character."

Barnes' original character breakdown proposed a companion who would arrive unexpectedly in the TARDIS, via a mysterious witness protection scheme. He indicated that Lucie would be "Not vulgar, but a total contrast to Charley or (her fellow companion) C'rizz. She speaks in a pretty broad Northern vernacular – she'll have no time at all for pretension, or ponces. She's precisely calculated to puncture the Doctor's pomposity, to deflate his balloon. She saw something she shouldn't, apparently, but for the life of her she can't imagine what. Still, she can stick it out for a few weeks, then they'll plonk her back exactly where she came from... right?" And who are "they"? Well, they're from Gallifrey...

So, who decided the mixture of stories? "That was also almost entirely Alan's responsibility," says Briggs. "He got all the prospective writers to pitch." Barnes then chose the storylines by reading them 'blind', without knowing who had submitted which! "Alan set up an online mailing list so that the chosen writers could discuss Lucie and another recurring character, the Headhunter. Of course, we had to do rewrites of Lucie's stuff as the chances of everyone having her speaking similarly were minimal."

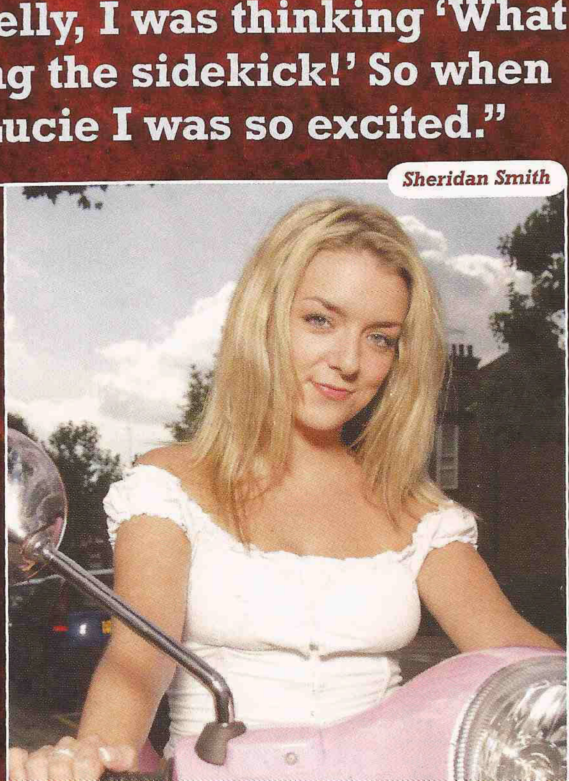
Like many actors around her age (she's 25), Sheridan Smith can't have been itching to appear in broadcast *Doctor Who* early in her career, as it simply wasn't on. All the same, the bubbly-but-thoughtful Smith assures us that "I was thrilled when I got the call – because *everyone* knows *Doctor Who*! I was very little when it was on in the 1980s, but I have seen the new stuff, and heard it on radio before. Watching it on telly just recently, I was thinking 'What a great part, being the sidekick and having all those cool adventures!', so when I got the part of Lucie I was so excited."

> **"Watching it on telly, I was thinking 'What a great part, being the sidekick!' So when I got the part of Lucie I was so excited."**
>
> ***Sheridan Smith***

It's the last day's recording for Sheridan, and she still sounds really excited. But what did Smith first make of Lucie? Could Lucie have come from the Doncaster/Scunthorpe area, where the actress herself grew up, or perhaps from Runcorn, the setting for *Two Pints of Lager...* the long-running BBC Three comedy Sheridan's best known for? "No", she laughs, "when I auditioned she was a generally brash, feisty northern bird. In the couple of scenes I read then, her cockiness and sarkyness immediately jumped off the page. But she's mortified when the Doctor tries to take her back to Preston because, as we find out later, she's actually from Blackpool. That's not so far from where I grew up, but Lucie's really not 'Janet from Runcorn'."

Did Sheridan find that Lucie emerged differently in the studio from how she'd first envisaged? "As she's gone along, in the different stories, yes. She's horribly rude to the Doctor at first, but her caring and sensitive sides do come out. Also, there's much more to her than just clinging to the Doctor. She can take control and lead the way for other characters, or calm them down if they're frantic." Lucie must be a well-rounded character, then, by sci-fi standards. "That's because she's a Northerner," Sheridan says cheekily.

So, Lucie is a contemporary English girl – "about 19 or so," says Barnes'



▼ *Sheridan as Michelle in BBC Three sitcom Grownups.*

Katarina Olsson, Una Stubbs, Stephen Gately, Claire Buckfield, Bernard Cribbins and Sheridan Smith in *Horror of Glam Rock.*

breakdown – who makes an impression on a Doctor travelling solo. "Rose must have been in Alan's mind," agrees Briggs, "but he said 'Let's have a northern lass before Russell T Davies thinks of it!' It's never happened before, after all, but," he says in relief, "the production office did approve Lucie."

Although Sheridan's often in demand for TV productions, this may be the busiest week of her career yet as, amazingly, she's recording these eight episodes while performing in two Shakespeare stage productions. "It's been quite full on!" Sheridan laughs delightedly. She does this so infectiously that you could imagine bottling it as a replacement for tonic water. "I'm doing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as Hermia, and *The Taming of the Shrew*, as Bianca, in Regent's Park. That's such an unusual contrast – chasing the Daleks and running from explosions as Lucie, then putting a wig and corset on to talk Shakespeare," she says, deliberately poshing up the sound of the Bard's name.

▲ Top: The two McGanns.

▲ Above: Barnaby Edwards' secret identity revealed!

▼ The Eighth Doctor as he appeared in the 1996 TV Movie.

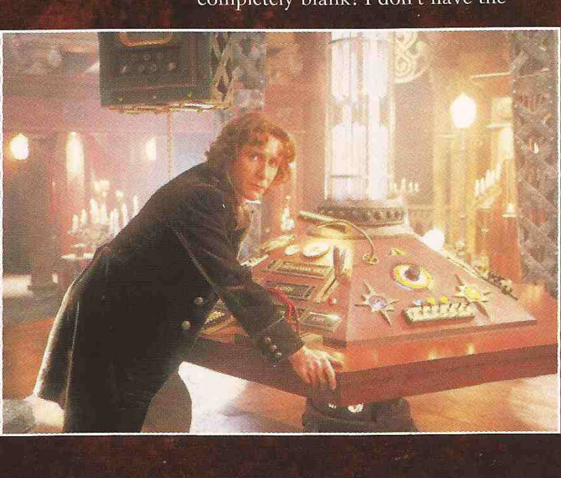
How has Sheridan kept focused on her three roles? "We've been doing Shakespeare for months, so in my head they're more set in stone and I can concentrate on Lucie, figuring out which stories come when" – for, first and last stories aside, the recording sequence is not as broadcast. "I've actually felt the evening shows have been more energetic because of the buzz of doing this by day. Mind you, my leg was hurt in a lovers' quarrel on stage the other night... So it has been quite tiring," she admits, not sounding remotely tired, "but I'm really honoured to have two jobs like this."

Back to the producers, to explain how Sheridan became involved. "The initial idea was to cast someone with soap-opera notoriety," Briggs recalls, "But then I thought 'Never mind that, let's make sure we have someone really good!' Which we did, thanks to Barney."

As the new series' casting director, the input of Barnaby Edwards was decisive. He'd acted in the initial McGann audios, and directed the acclaimed *Chimes of Midnight* (hear it again this Christmas on BBC7!). Briggs and Edwards had spent hours chatting while making the TV episode *Dalek* two years ago, and Briggs says that "After that I knew he'd be brilliant to have around on anything. Barney's really charming with actors in the green room, where I'm socially inept..."

"I'd just like to point out," Edwards cuts in, "that I do have a gun trained at Nick's head right now! But really, being a casting director has been one of the most thrilling things ever for me. Nick and I have pretty similar ideas, so I started producing shortlists, and he'd say if they were brilliant, or horrible – or, indeed, dead..."

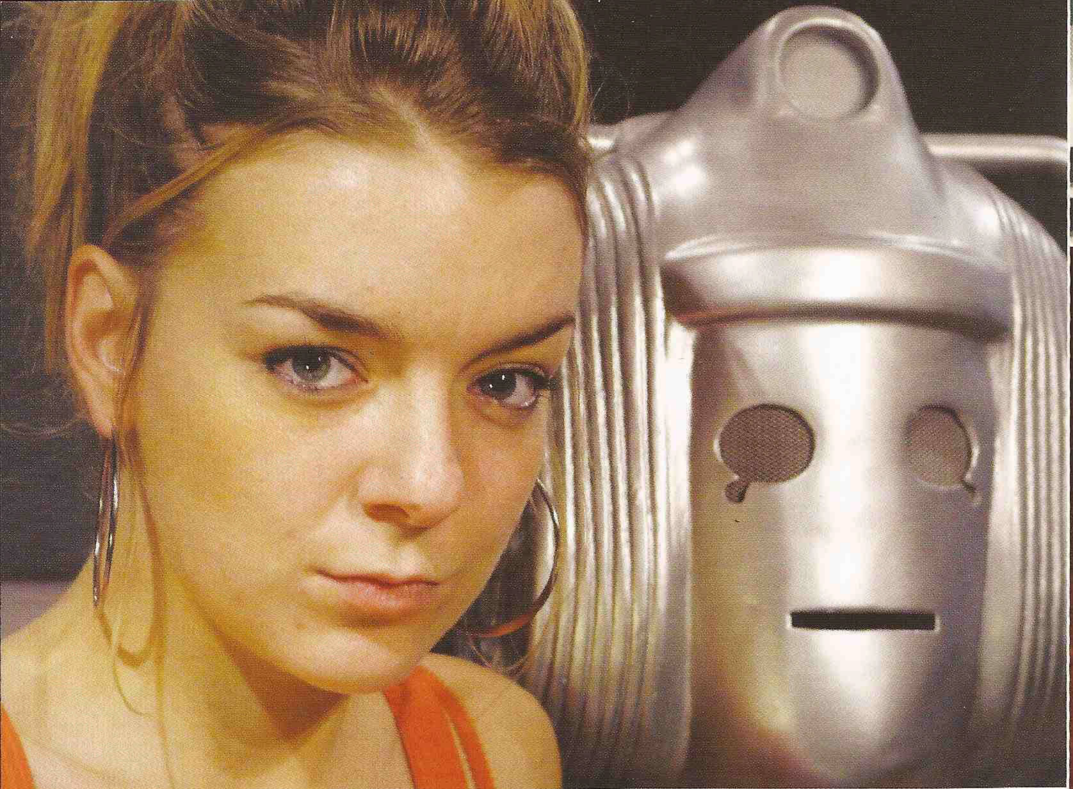
All the same, Briggs is truly appreciative. "In any production, casting is the worst stage for me. The moment I start, my mind goes completely blank! I don't have the casting gene, but Barney has been indestructible in talking to agents, where you start on opposing sides – their job is to secure the best deal – and you have to cultivate a non-combative relationship with them."

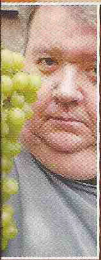


"To cast Lucie," Edwards explains, "there were two castings sessions, because for an eight-part season, we had to have an actress capable of much greater range than for just one story. The first session, which I wasn't involved in, was done mostly from Jason Haigh-Ellery's suggestions, as he has many theatre and TV contacts."

"Funnily, we did those auditions at BBC Broadcasting House with BBC7's senior presentation producer Martin Montague present," Briggs mentions, "and afterwards I apologised to him for all the *Doctor Who* details, which must have been boring him senseless. 'Actually', he said, 'I do buy your CDs...'" Yes, another fan in high places!

Edwards became casting director before the second auditions, and was delighted to find some recurring names, including Sheridan's, among others' suggestions. "She was on my list anyway," Edwards recalls, "although Jason had already met her socially and mentioned she'd be keen on radio. Well, several actresses did very good performances – I'd incorporated some from the first session – but Sheridan was just sensational. She's still a young actress, but has nine years of professional experience under her belt. She wears that lightly,





but it shows when she takes the more mundane sentences about corridors and puts it right into character."

"Paul and Sheridan seem to work really well together," says Clare Buckfield, a Big Finish alumnus since 2001 who guest stars in the second story. "His voice is quite intense and sexy, and comedically Shez is the queen. She's so emotive, and you'll never get just the obvious reading of a line from her. Because she's so good she does not stop working, and I've been a fan for ages – since we both auditioned for *Two Pints of Lager...*" What, you were both up for the role of Janet? "Yes, and they decided to go with me to record the pilot, even though Shez had a good rapport with Ralf Little as Jonny. Then, after the pilot was recorded they sacked all the girls but kept all the men – hilarious! But that's when Shez took over." Later, it was through Buckfield that Haigh-Ellery first met Sheridan.

Last spring, Freema Agyeman had to keep her casting as a companion secret for months. Were Sheridan and the guests also inked in long ago? "Goodness, no," says Edwards, "With any established name, like Sheridan, it's best to leave the casting until close to recording. If we'd said six months ago, 'Here's a week-or-so's radio work for you in August', she might have been offered three months on a film by now. People might love radio, but it might be one day's work as opposed to a major theatre tour."

Was Edwards consciously being more ambitious now for Big Finish? "I had no qualms about going straight to the top, and no limit except the budget," he says. Surprisingly, the budgets involved are only slightly higher than for Big Finish's regular CD releases. "My big advantage was that these scripts, and their guest star parts, are really good – and actors want to do good work. Quite remarkably, once we sent a script to someone then, with just one exception, they've accepted the role."

▲ Top: Lucie meets the Doctor's second-greatest enemies in ***Human Resources****.*

▲ Above: The cast of ***Immortal Beloved****.*

▼ Anita Dobson seems thrilled to meet one of the stars of ***Blood of the Daleks****.*

"It's just a question of *asking* people," Briggs admits. "and Barney is our solution! But for the future, we have to be proud enough of every script to think 'I can show this to anyone and ask them to be in it'. That's the real litmus test."

So which guest star are they most excited about having in this week? Edwards laughs guiltily. Go on, share... "I'm really excited to have Timothy West on board – a real legend of stage, screen and radio, who's never done *Doctor Who* – and I'm equally excited that people who have appeared before, like Nerys Hughes and Elspet Gray, are back in completely different roles."

DWM is aiming to bring you a series preview before the New Year, but meanwhile here are some appetisers from that remarkable roll-call assembled by Edwards. The first story, *Blood of the Daleks*, pits the Doctor and Lucie against his oldest enemies. "I was so shocked when Nick first did the Dalek voice this morning. I didn't realise that it was him!" confesses Anita Dobson, famously *EastEnders'* landlady Angie Watts in the 1980s when (imagine!) it was a bigger show than *Doctor Who*.

The two-part opener is set on an oddly-named colony. "I'm really thrilled to be playing Eileen Klint, the acting president of Red Rocket Rising," explains Dobson, "Eileen's probably been a lowly government official, but has now been catapulted to great power." In some adversity, it seems. "Absolutely, though she brought that on herself! I'm a huge science-fiction fan," Anita promises. "I've been in *Red Dwarf* and my husband Brian (May, the Queen guitarist) did the *Flash Gordon* soundtrack, but now I feel like I'm finally here..." she twinkles. "So I just had to ring Brian at lunchtime to tell him I'd met a Dalek!"

When the Doctor and Lucie meet Klint, they also meet Asha. "She's an opinionated girl with a secret," explains rising star Hayley Atwell, "and the driving force behind a lot of the action." Asha was working closely with the late Professor Martez... "And she's taken on his views about what the human race should evolve into. She believes it's for the good of mankind – and that's terrifying."

Atwell has been making waves just before this recording, as the leading lady in Woody Allen's latest feature. A contrast with meeting the Daleks? "Very different! An American film was more alien for me, not really knowing which genre to play it in – whereas with the Daleks, it's like something that's been passed down, where you pick up the rhythms quickly..."

Before that film shoot, Hayley was working alongside Billie Piper in her first TV role since Rose. "Yes, as Rosa Garland, I'm the best friend of Sally Lockhart (Piper) in the Philip Pullman book *The Ruby in the Smoke*, which we filmed for the BBC." Everyone seems to enjoy working with Billie... "Oh, she's an amazing girl," Atwell volunteers, "incredibly generous with advice for someone like me, literally straight out of drama school. Having been in this industry so long, Billie's incredibly professional on set and takes it all in her stride." Atwell's looking forward to working with Piper again soon, on ITV's *Mansfield Park*.

Some people don't get

on quite so well – like the Doctor and Lucie! Nick Briggs notes that "They're playing it rather like two people thrust together on a blind date, who have to get on somehow."

"But there's room to have adventures with someone you don't necessarily see eye-to-eye with," Paul McGann counters. It isn't just bickering, then? "Sulking's also an adventure, now and again," McGann observes drily.

> **"We have to be proud enough of every script to think 'I can show this to anyone and they'll want to be in it'..."**
>
> ***Nicholas Briggs***

Their second adventure, set beside a British motorway in 1974, is the splendidly-titled *Horror of Glam Rock*. It includes the words 'inclement', 'glittery' and 'tomatoes', and boasts the impossibly spry Bernard Cribbins as Arnold. "He's an archetypal, slightly villainous music manager," Cribbins explains. "Arnold's probably been in the business a while and lost a good few clients before his current act, The Tomorrow Twins. I'm playing it very seriously," he deadpans, "but *Doctor Who* stories often have that bizarre quality which you can play with wide-eyed amazement."

It's not Cribbins' first brush with *Doctor Who* – way back in 1966 he was companionable policeman Tom Campbell in the second Dalek movie, *Daleks: Invasion Earth 2150*. "Yes, with the lovely Peter Cushing as the Doctor," Cribbins recalls. "I got into terrible trouble with the director, Gordon Flemyng, for corpsing at the Dalek which sounded Australian!"

Sounding Irish in this story are Arnold's aspiring pop duo, played (and sung!) by Stephen Gately, former Boyzone-member-turned-stage-star, and our old friend Clare Buckfield. "Trisha plays guitar, while Stephen's Tommy plays the stylophone... a strangely pleasant but comical instrument," Buckfield decides. "Barney Edwards knows I have quite an ear for accents, because we worked together in pantomime, where I eventually had the whole cast sounding Australian! So he asked me 'How's your Irish?' Now, my family is half-Irish, but I was slightly nervous. Still, after lots of research, hopefully we sound pretty close."

▲ *Above and top: More from the cast of* ***Horror of Glam Rock****. Who'd have thunk that Bernard Cribbins and Stephen Gately would ever co-star in something?!*

▲ *Top right: Elspet Gray as Hera in* ***Immortal Beloved****.*

Arnold is desperate to get his duo to a *Top of the Pops* recording, but Tommy's unearthly connections are holding them up. Cribbins was himself a pop star in 1962, gaining Top Ten hits with *Hole in the Ground* and *Right Said Fred*. "I was hugely famous for three months, especially in our street, but I was an actor first and foremost, the records were only a small sidestep."

▲ *Elspet Gray in* ***Arc of Infinity****.*

In the third story, *Immortal Beloved*, Ian McNeice and Elspet Gray star as divinely powerful couple Zeus and Hera. But the setting's not as classical as it seems... "I've never played an immortal before, and it's the start of a whole new career for me," quips McNeice. He's no stranger to science-fiction; a genre where he's played, for example, the flying Baron Harkonnen in *Children of Dune* – "one of the best experiences of my life," he says.

"Playing a character like Zeus, who's written so well and wittily, is exciting because there's so many ways you can have fun. On radio, your flight of fancy can take you anywhere. What attracted me was his drive – and the chance to take the mickey out of all the other cast – especially the Doctor."

"Lady Hera is pretty imperious and haughty," summarises Elspet Gray. "She likes her own way and seems to get it... Now, I'm hopeless with sci-fi plots, but it was lovely to be asked to do this, which is beautifully written, with great humour." Was this style of story a surprise? "Oh no. I used to love watching the original stories with my kids," Elspet says. "Then I appeared as a Time Lord – or should that have been a Time Lady? – alongside Michael Gough and Leonard Sachs. We wore the most extraordinary head-dresses!" This was Senator Thalia in *Arc of Infinity* (1983). "Right now, *Doctor Who*'s become compulsive viewing. There's old folks like me sitting watching it, and setting the video if we're out, while my little grand-daughter adores it too."

The fourth story, *Phobos*, takes place around a future lunar adventure park, and sees the *Doctor Who* début of Timothy West. "Alas, nobody's ever asked me before. Fortunately, I just

happened to have this day free," West says. When Nick Briggs mentions that he'd thought of West as "one of those actors who should have been involved," West smiles philosophically. "Yes, I've always thought that too." West did work with a "magnificent, absolutely smashing" young McGann in 1986's *The Monocled Mutineer*. But what about Timothy's character today? "Kai's job is managing a holiday park, but he's very concerned about evil forces taking over that environment. People shrug him off as an eccentric fabricator of rumours, but he has his reasons..."

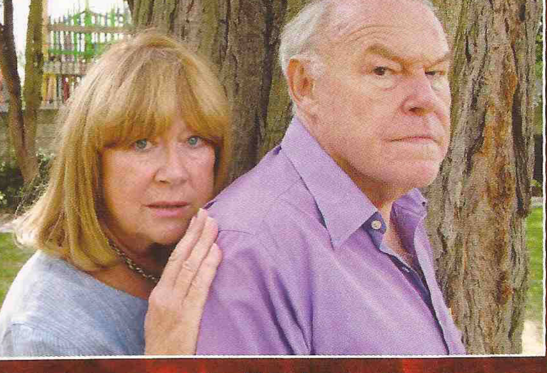
"I'm sure Eris loves her Kai," says Nerys Hughes of her role alongside West. "She's warm and sympathetic, though Kai's an oddity and can infuriate Eris, She's always giving in to his dreams, but she's terribly practical – quite unlike me with machines – and definitely a bit butch!" Hughes can't recall playing any character who's such a near-namesake to herself before, "But I'm terribly thrilled to be included in this grand club again." Like Elspet Gray, Hughes' previous guest role was alongside Fifth Doctor Peter Davison, but as the scientist Todd in *Kinda* (1982). "It was hallucinogenic and spiritual. I'm still getting letters analysing it from all over the world..."

Being Welsh-born herself, what's Hughes' perception of the current Cardiff-based series? "Well of course I'm proud! I met a producer at BBC Wales who said that they'd needed something to give them a zip, and *Doctor Who* has completely galvanised everything there."

The penultimate story, *No More Lies*, merits another blue-chip couple in Nigel Havers and Julia McKenzie, as Nick and Rachel Zimmerman. "This is my first brush with any *Doctor Who*," confirms the smooth-talking Havers, "so it's quite an historic moment."

"I can probably alienate the entire population at one fell swoop," says McKenzie, "because I've never seen *Doctor Who*. Missing it hasn't been intentional, I always seem to be on stage or cooking when it's on. Sorry!"

"Actually," recalls Havers, "I watched the first episode, back in 1963. To be honest I wasn't very impressed – it didn't scare me at all, unlike others at my school. But I loved the whole time traveller concept, so I said 'yes' before reading the script."



If McKenzie's so fresh to this world, what made her accept the role? "I love doing radio and creating voices," is Julia's simple answer. "I'd no idea what a *Doctor Who* script might be like, but this is super – rich and inventive, perfect for radio – so I can see why people get hooked. Now that David Tennant's the Doctor, I might venture into seeing it. I worked with him on the film *Bright Young Things* and he's a fantastic actor."

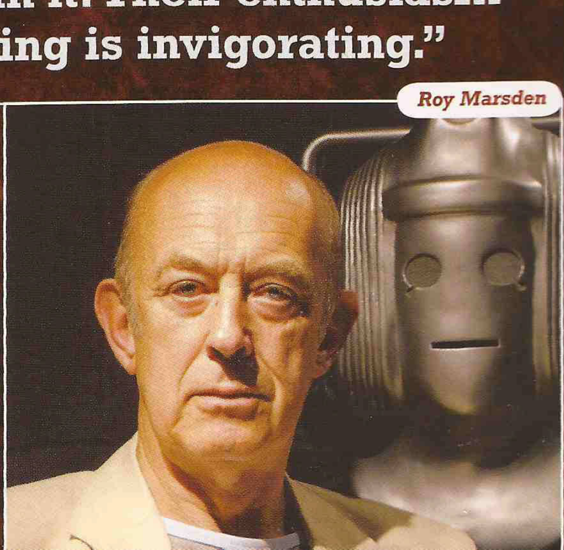
▲ *Top left: Nerys Hughes in* **Kinda**.

▲ *Top: Julia McKenzie and Nigel Havers in* **No More Lies**.

▲ *Above: Nerys Hughes and Timothy West in* **Phobos**.

▼ *Roy Marsden and friend in* **Human Resources**.

> **"This is proper, grown-up drama, and it's a privilege to be in it. Their enthusiasm for good storytelling is invigorating."**
>
> ***Roy Marsden***



What about the couple they play in *No More Lies*? "Nick's almost in the same business as the Doctor," says Havers cryptically, "but he's come down to Earth. He may appear villainous, but now he's trying to save what he loves."

"Rachel's an interesting woman," observes McKenzie, "in that she's married an alien but has a strikingly normal marriage. She's obviously a brave soul... Oh, and she sings – in Hungarian," McKenzie laughs.

The radio series ends with the two-part *Human Resources*, featuring some old-school Cybermen. Roy Marsden, best known on TV as Inspector Dalgliesh, recorded his part as entrepreneur Todd Hulbert just days after filming a different role for the next TV series. "I was a *Doctor Who* virgin until I went to Cardiff," Marsden says. "I had no idea how big the whole enterprise was. I was gob-smacked by the mass of information about old adventures, but their enthusiasm for storytelling was really invigorating."

"Now, when I got Eddie Robson's script for *Human Resources*, I sat at the kitchen table and devoured it whole. This is proper, grown-up drama, and it's a privilege to be allowed to be in it. On the surface, Hulbert seems to be a perfectly nice but harassed businessman. But, as benign as he seems, what he's doing is basically like Hitler. The sheer plausibility of the plot with his office workers was really illuminating."

At the end of the Saturday recording with Marsden, Paul McGann leaves the studio, his work on the series done. After six days at the mic, McGann has every right to be exhausted, yet there is still a spring in his step. All told, there's a sense that these stories are going to sound pretty special. Roll on New Year's Eve, then – a good omen, that, for (as anyone who's seen the 1996 TV Movie should recall) that's the night the Eighth Doctor first came to life...

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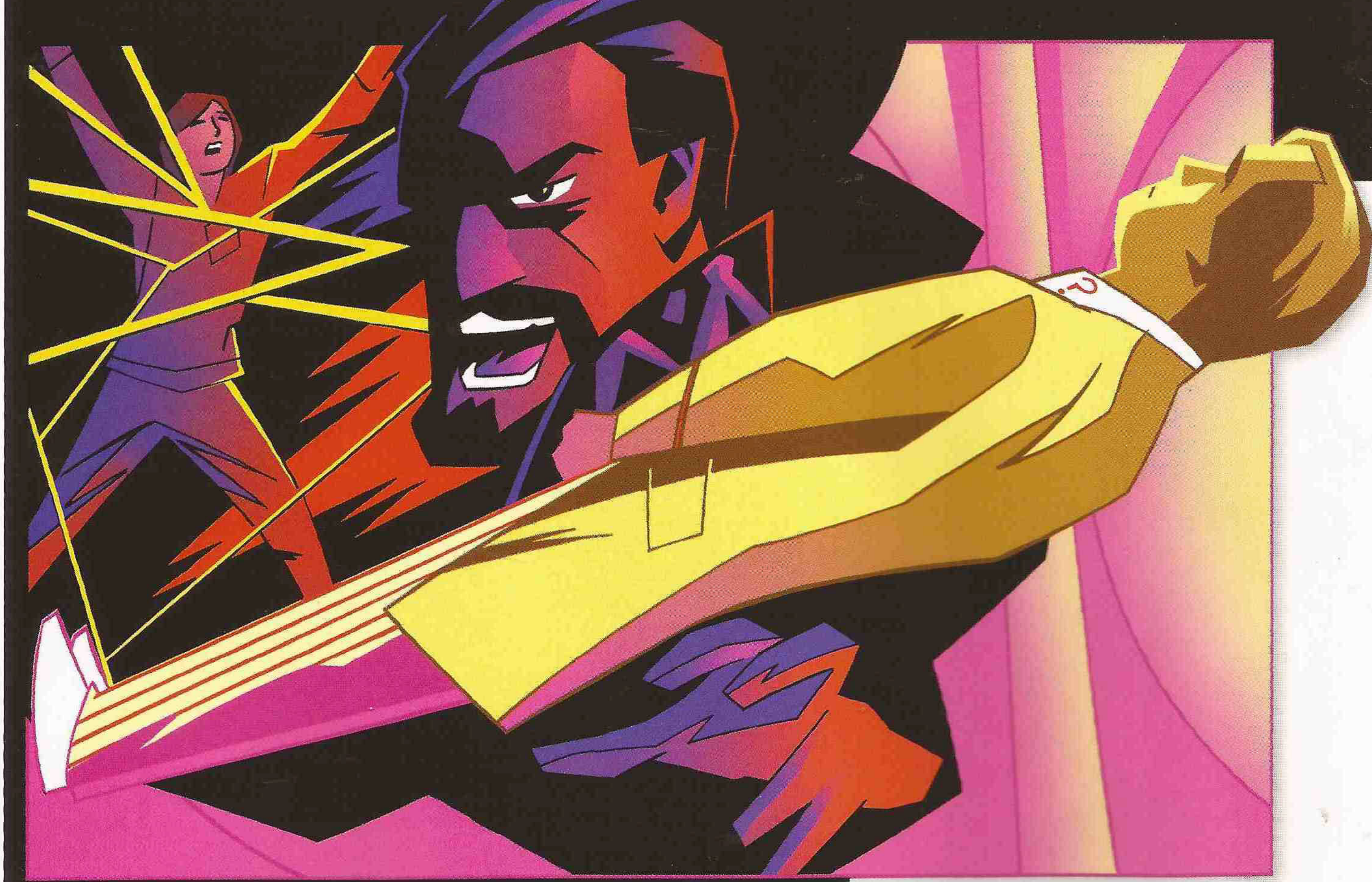


In 1999, four fans embarked on a quest to watch every episode of *Doctor Who,* in order, from the start. This is their ongoing story...

THE TIME TEAM

Compiled by **MICHAEL PRITCHARD** Illustrations by **ADRIAN SALMON**

PETER

CLAY

JAC

RICHARD

CASTROVALVA

Newness! Freshness! Whiteness!

Will the Time Team, a-gathered appropriately in Clay's exciting new! fresh! white! flat, recover from their Season Eighteen doldrums? Will the new Doctor win them over? Let's find out, as *Castrovalva* enters the video player...

"Hooray!" cries Peter as Adric, Nyssa and Tegan gather round the Fourth Doctor. "The first ever pre-titles sequence in *Doctor Who*!"

Then the title sequence rolls – pretty much the same as the previous one. "I wish they'd waited 'til now to change them," says Clay. "The new theme and titles feel more appropriate now."

The story proper begins with the new Doctor and co racing back to the TARDIS after a rather underwhelming struggle with some security guards – and a sinister, familiar Doric column appears (no, it's not Ionic, so there!). The Master does something a bit peculiar with some video effects, and then the TARDIS sets sail. Adric hurries off into the corridors to find the erratic new Doctor.

"I love him already," says Clay.

"C'mon, he's only said five words," protests Peter.

"I don't care," shrugs Clay. "OK, perhaps it's partly because he's *my* childhood Doctor, but even so I've always found it hard to accept a new one during *The Time Team* before. But he's so manic and wonderful right from the off. After so much Tom it's exciting to have such a different Doctor. It immediately puts a whole new spin on the show."

Jac's not so immediately keen. "He does excellent impressions of the former Doctors in his weakened state. But I'm always wary of nods to old eras, you get all nostalgic for them."

Peter sags. "I can't get over the fact that Adric is now the character we're most familiar with. Perhaps that's why this episode's set in the TARDIS and has continuity references every five seconds – to remind us we're still watching *Doctor Who*!"

Not long after, Adric disappears and the Doctor kits himself out in new togs. Richard has this to say: "I can't say I'm entirely sure about the trousers, but the muted colours of the Doctor's new costume suit Peter Davison rather well."

Peter shakes his head. "Rather than the casually eccentric dress of the previous Doctors, this outfit looks like a costume, completely artificial. Ugh."

Back in the console room ("Why are they all suddenly calling it that?" demands Clay, "it's the control room and always will be!") Tegan and Nyssa are looking for help from the TARDIS data bank, seemingly powered by Ceefax. Richard scoffs. "All this stuff about the logic of typing in 'IF' for Index File is silly – doubly so when you see that the keypad only has about nine buttons on it!"

"It must work like texting," suggests Peter.

The Doctor, Nyssa and Tegan reach the tranquil TARDIS Zero Room, for a bit of synapse-healing, and Clayton's happy. "I like the immediate change in the Doctor. Though I'm gobsmacked when he tells Tegan she's a good co-ordinator! Is he watching the same Tegan as the rest of us?"

But the quiet of the Zero Room doesn't last very long – the Master has used a double of Adric to send the TARDIS spinning back to the Big Bang and certain doom. "I don't think we've spent this long in the TARDIS since *The Edge of Destruction*," notes Jac. "A monster or two wouldn't go amiss..."

As Nyssa goes to, er, vent the thermo-buffer, Peter's bothered about something. "This is such an odd TARDIS crew for the audience to try to identify with – three geniuses and a mouthy Aussie, all technobabbling away."

Jac nods. "I like the Doctor already, but not the companions." She ponders the Master's use of Adric, strung up in his Power Web. "So the

Master's using Adric to power his scanner. Makes you wonder if the rise of CCTV is leading to similar teenage-boy-in-web situations in offices all over the country. That's where our council tax goes, you know."

"It's very *Tomorrow People*," notes Clay. "Older bearded man tortures young lad in web. Oo-er."

Peter quotes the Master. "'I'll burn through your barrier, boy!'"

"Normally I'd be telling you to stop it, you dirty pair," says Jac. "But it looks like Adric's having a good time in that web. He dresses to the right, I notice..."

"Stop it, you filthy trio!" demands Richard.

The TARDIS escapes Event One – and with the Zero Room jettisoned, the girls are forced to take the Doctor, in a zero cabinet, to the town of Castrovalva across some rather pleasant woodland. "This location footage is beautifully shot," says Richard. "It really lends itself to this being a place of tranquillity. Only a short distance away from the DWM offices you know!"

"And such a gentle pace of storytelling, too," sighs Peter, unconvinced. "I can see this tale appealing particularly to amateur cabinet makers and ramblers."

"I like Nyssa falling in the water," says Clay. "And I'm really taking to Tegan. We haven't had a companion quite like her before – loud and suspicious of everything. I wish it was just her and the Doctor."

Part Three sees the Doctor enter Castrovalva itself. Richard approves. "It's rather nice the way they've made the Castovalvans look rather frightening and brutal, but under their hunting gear they're really rather pleasant and tranquil."

> "What an odd TARDIS crew for the audience to try to identify with – three alien geniuses and a mouthy Australian air-hostess!" **RICHARD**

Peter's noticed something else. "Arrrrgh! Yet more beardy men! They're everywhere!"

One particular beardy man's got Jac's attention. "This 'vulnerable Doctor searching for the Doctor' is wonderful stuff, but if I can tell that the Portreeve is the Master because *he looks exactly like him*, then surely Nyssa, if not the Doctor, should. Pah!"

"I love the way the Portreeve gently lets it slip that the visitor himself is the Doctor," points out Richard. "Spooky."

The Doctor and co breakfast with the Portreeve and swap stories. Clay gasps. "He's told the Portreeve about *Day of the Daleks*! How bizarre!"

"Big mistake to mention the Daleks," says Jac. "Now I want them to appear! I want monsters!"

"This Doctor's so timid and polite," observes Peter. "Such a contrast to his overconfident predecessors. Like a little boy. Awww... And I like Nyssa's line 'I know so little about telebiogenesis' – at last she's said something I can identify with!"

It turns out that Castrovalva is no ordinary town – and Part Three ends with the Doctor realising it's a space/time trap. Richard approves. "The recursive idea with the corridors and stairwells linking together to form a trap is lovely. It's a pity that the Castrovalva studio set is so small so it doesn't convey the concept as well as it could."

Part Four sees the Doctor trying to explain the trap to the Castrovalvans. "Mergrave's gradual realisation about Castrovalva as he positions his pharmacy four times on the map is wonderfully handled," says Richard. "And you know, if Castrovalva is spherical, the map works!"

The Team gasp in mock surprise as the Portreeve reveals himself to be the Master. "Ooh, there's some terrible dialogue here," notes Clay. "'You must stop him – he's the Master!' bleats Nyssa."

Richard sighs. "Anthony Ainley was fine as the Portreeve. He plays those older, wiser characters so well, and yet as soon as he becomes the Master he's a terrible panto villain."

Luckily, the Doctor convinces local librarian Shardovan that he is more than a product of the Master's imagination and he sacrifices himself to free Adric and destroy the web holding the town together. "Here's a puzzler," asks Richard. "Do we count Shardovan as dying in our Cliché Counters, since he never actually existed in the first place?"

"I think so, yes," says Peter. "Mind you, I still think we should have upped the counter several trillion during *Logopolis*." He laughs as Castrovalva collapses and the Master is dragged inside by the villagers. "Groped by a group of matronly washer women and the local chemist. What a terrible way to go."

CLICHÉ COUNTER

Deaths on screen so far

00848

One or more of the regular cast rendered unconscious

00168

One or more of the regular cast incarcerated

00218

The story ends with the recovered Doctor leading his three pals back to the TARDIS. "What a lovely warm smile he has," notes Peter. "Yes, I like him already."

"He just needs *one* Romana or *one* Sarah Jane to accompany him," Jac reckons. "Not this gaggle of loons."

Clay sums up *Castrovalva*. "I enjoyed that more than anything in Season Eighteen. A lot of the same problems remain – the big idea was left undeveloped, it was underdirected with little sense of urgency – but the Fifth Doctor is great, and that makes such an enormous difference. Unlike Tom in that last year, he *wants* to be there!"

FOUR TO DOOMSDAY

And so the first proper adventure of the new Doctor, *Four to Doomsday*, begins – with some arguing in the TARDIS.

"Oh lord," says Clay. "Almost every line of this dialogue is excruciating. Thank goodness the Doctor is so brilliant."

"Tegan's *so* thick," fumes Jac. "What with smug, dull Nyssa, Adric's actually the most sympathetic companion... well, almost. Except now he's suddenly become deliberately sexist and annoying. This bickering is just embarrassing."

The Doctor steps out aboard a gigantic, empty spaceship. "That's an amazing design," approves Clay. "It genuinely looks vast. Wow!"

"And the spy-globe Monopticons are rather well done," notes Richard.

"Aw!" gasps Peter. "Did you see the joy on the Doctor's face as he examined the equipment? He's not been so happy in ages." But as the others join the Doctor on the ship he's not so pleased. "The composition of the TARDIS crew is just... well... wrong. There's Tegan who's constantly cross and whinging, Adric who's constantly arrogant and whinging and Nyssa who... well, apart from technobabbling, she doesn't do much, does she?"

"I really like Tegan," says Clay. "If I was a companion I'd be just like her."

"God help the Doctor," sighs Richard.

But the ship isn't that empty – there's a big green frog called Monarch and his Ministers for Enlightenment and Persuasion. "Goebbels was Hitler's Minister of Enlightenment," says Clayton knowledgeably. "So I'm guessing Monarch isn't very nice. How odd to start a story with the villain inviting the Doctor in for a chat. I'm not sure if that's a brilliant inversion of the cliché or incompetence."

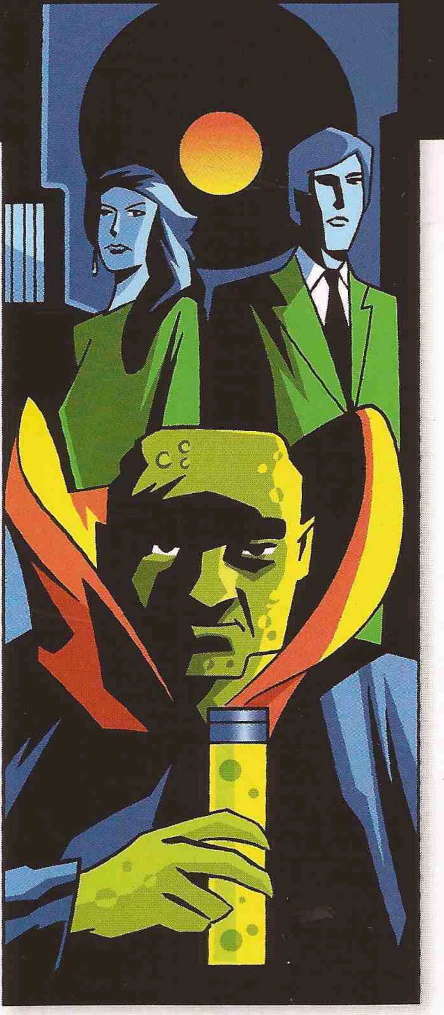
Enlightenment asks Tegan for a quick guide to 80s Earth fashions. "Blimey!" exclaims Richard. "That's one hell of a sketch that Tegan's done in just a few seconds!"

The Doctor and co are escorted to another area of the ship, where they meet various ethnic people – an Athenian, a Mayan, a Chinese man and an Aborigine. "Tegan talks the Aborigine dialect of 35,000 years before!" Peter scoffs. "That's ridiculous!"

"This story's starting to get interesting – all these different Earth people," notes Jac. "I want to know what's going on, but I also want all three companions ejected into space and someone else writing the dialogue. 'Pass the sodium chloride' – *heeellllppp!*"

"Writer Terence Dudley's telling the story the wrong way round," reckons Clay. "Imagine how much more mysterious it would have been if we'd glimpsed these strange Earth people first?"

THE TIME TEAM



Part One ends with Enlightenment and Persuasion returning – as Tegan's sketches come to life. "Cool!" whoops Peter. "Living drawings! What a great idea for a *Doctor Who* story..."

This episode sees Adric and Nyssa wandering about doing not very much, while the Doctor and Nyssa enjoy various ethnic dance displays. "These dancing Aborigines are wonderful!" enthuses Richard. "When they first ska-walk in it's like you're watching a Madness tribute band!"

Peter sags. "It's no wonder Monarch's a bit loopy if the only entertainment he's had during 40,000 years is daily re-runs of Arthur and his Amazing Ambling Abbos."

"I don't think we should use that word, naughty Peter!" cries Jac.

"Ah, but I'm ethnic, I can say what I like," he replies. "And let me tell you, one dragon dance is more than enough. It's all very 'diverse' and 'vibrant'. Is Monarch actually Ken Livingstone?"

"They could use the Recreationals as idents on BBC One," says Clay. "All Monarch needs are some dancers in wheelchairs."

The display of Greek soldiery takes a nasty turn. "The little video effect of the sword actually going through the Trojan soldier is rather good for *Doctor Who*," nods Richard. "Although he does look suspiciously like..."

"By Zeus, it's Andrew Pixley!" cries Clay.

Part Two ends with Athenian Bigon revealing that he's actually an android. "Bigon's revelation is great!" applauds Jac. "One thing I'll say about this story is that it has excellent cliffhangers."

Part Three sees Nyssa and Adric back in the story, invited in for another chat with Monarch. Jac splutters. "'Nyssa: What about love? Monarch: Love?' Is that the worst exchange in *Doctor Who* ever? Sci-fi cliché #1!"

Adric is impressed by Monarch's mission – to convert the people of Earth to android form. "I just can't believe even Adric could be that stupid," sighs Jac. "He tells Monarch the entire format and backstory of *Doctor Who*!"

"Terence Dudley's been reading his writers' guidelines, hasn't he?" notes Peter. "Rassilon, the Power Room, the Eye of Harmony, the Doctor's trance powers... why doesn't Adric just hand Monarch a copy of the *Programme Guide*?"

"It's worth it for Nyssa saying 'Why don't you just shut up, Adric?'" reckons Clay. "At last she's showing some gumption. And I rather like this discussion of the rights and wrongs of the body, love and the soul." He's also very keen on Tegan. "At last, a companion behaving like an ordinary person! She shouts at the Doctor, belts Adric, cries and flies off in the TARDIS!"

Jac's losing the will to live. "'Nyssa: They were going to kill me! The Doctor: Yes, the devils.' He sounds like he cares almost as much as I do!"

Part Four – and Monarch's plan unravels when the Doctor and a converted Adric get all the dancers to dance at once, spacewalk to the TARDIS, and shrink Monarch with his own poison. The Team aren't very impressed.

"I hope the cricket ball stuff in the spacewalk is real science," says Jac. "Because it's rather clever."

"The Doctor looks silly without a suit in space," reckons Clay. "The best bit of this sequence is Bigon and co watching from the window. Hilarious! The Aborigine shouts '*He did it!*'"

Richard sighs. "So let me get this straight. Monarch has a deadly frog poison with which he's going to wipe out the entire population of Earth, and yet when the phial is smashed, it's only actually Monarch who gets shrunk?"

Jac's confused. "I still haven't worked out why he spent thousands of years making all those trips to Earth. Anyone?"

As the TARDIS departs, Richard sums up: "Well, that was all rather pedestrian, wasn't it? I have no problem with straightforward stories, but this really didn't seem to go anywhere."

Peter weighs in: "If Douglas Adams had given it a script polish it could have been a classic. Megalomaniac frog person with a God-complex, travelling with a troupe of world music androids, attempts to charm twentieth-century Earth into submission so he can steal silicon and then travel back in time to meet himself? Could have been a *Hitchhikers* book!"

Jac's next: "Lovely cliffhangers. But a bit dull and cursed with the companions of doom."

Clay's almost upbeat: "For all its flaws – and nobody's mentioned the horrible squeaky music – it was lively and fun. Long live the Fifth Doctor! Let's hope for some better stories for him soon."

"Ooh, what's happened to her?" wonders Peter as Nyssa collapses into a lifeless heap in the closing seconds of Part Four.

Jac shrugs. "More to the point, will anybody notice?"

> "If only Douglas Adams had given *Four to Doomsday* a script polish, it could have been a classic! Such a *Hitchhikers*-y idea..." **PETER**

AND YOU SAID...

"By now, they're really starting to put things in just to please the fans – most notably Peter Davison's awful impressions of his predecessors."
ROBERT KEELEY EMAIL

"No monsters (again), wrong time slot, endless TARDIS scenes and annoying companions in horrible outfits. And listen to Anthony Ainley as he says 'My web!' at the end. Pure ham."
ALAN SHERIDAN EMAIL

"Christopher H Bidmead writes the Fifth Doctor exceedingly well, giving him little moments of enthusiastic distraction now and again, which most of the other Davison writers didn't do. It's a trait David Tennant seems to have taken on board."
STEVE MANFRED WISCONSIN, USA

"*Castrovalva* is hands down the best of all the post regeneration stories. Unravelling the scarf, 'The Solution', the little girl counting to three and 'That's democracy for you'. Sheer poetry, dear boy!"
BILL ALBERT IOWA, USA

"It's not so much a plot as a series of imaginary places for the Doctor to put himself back together in, and could as well just be inside his head. But to make up for the 'ambient' script, the design and music are intricate and beautiful – shame the Master's from a different, cornier programme."
ALEX WILCOCK ISLE OF DOGS

"Isn't Tegan a fantastic 'sketcher' in *Four to Doomsday*? Should have quit air hostessing and done that instead. Then she wouldn't have ended up in the TARDIS, moaning for two years!"
SIMON SMITH NOTTINGHAM

"There is a rapport between the time travellers and the guest characters which had been largely absent from the Tom Baker years. The 'TARDIS family' and the dovetailing of the serials into one another with a central quest to get Tegan back home seems to be deliberately reminiscent of 1960s *Who*."
STEPHEN MARTIN HINCKLEY

"A meandering journey to nowhere in particular, notable only for its tedious 'celebrity' casting. The first completely pointless story of the 1980s."
ALAN SHERIDAN EMAIL

JOIN THE TEAM...

In DWM 377 the Time Team will be watching *Black Orchid* and *Earthshock* – and we want to hear *your* views on these stories too! Please send any comments to the editorial address on p10; or by email to *dwm@panini.co.uk* (marked 'Time Team' in the subject line) by 10 November 2006.

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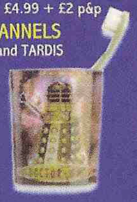

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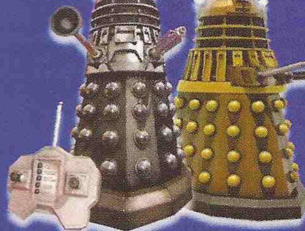

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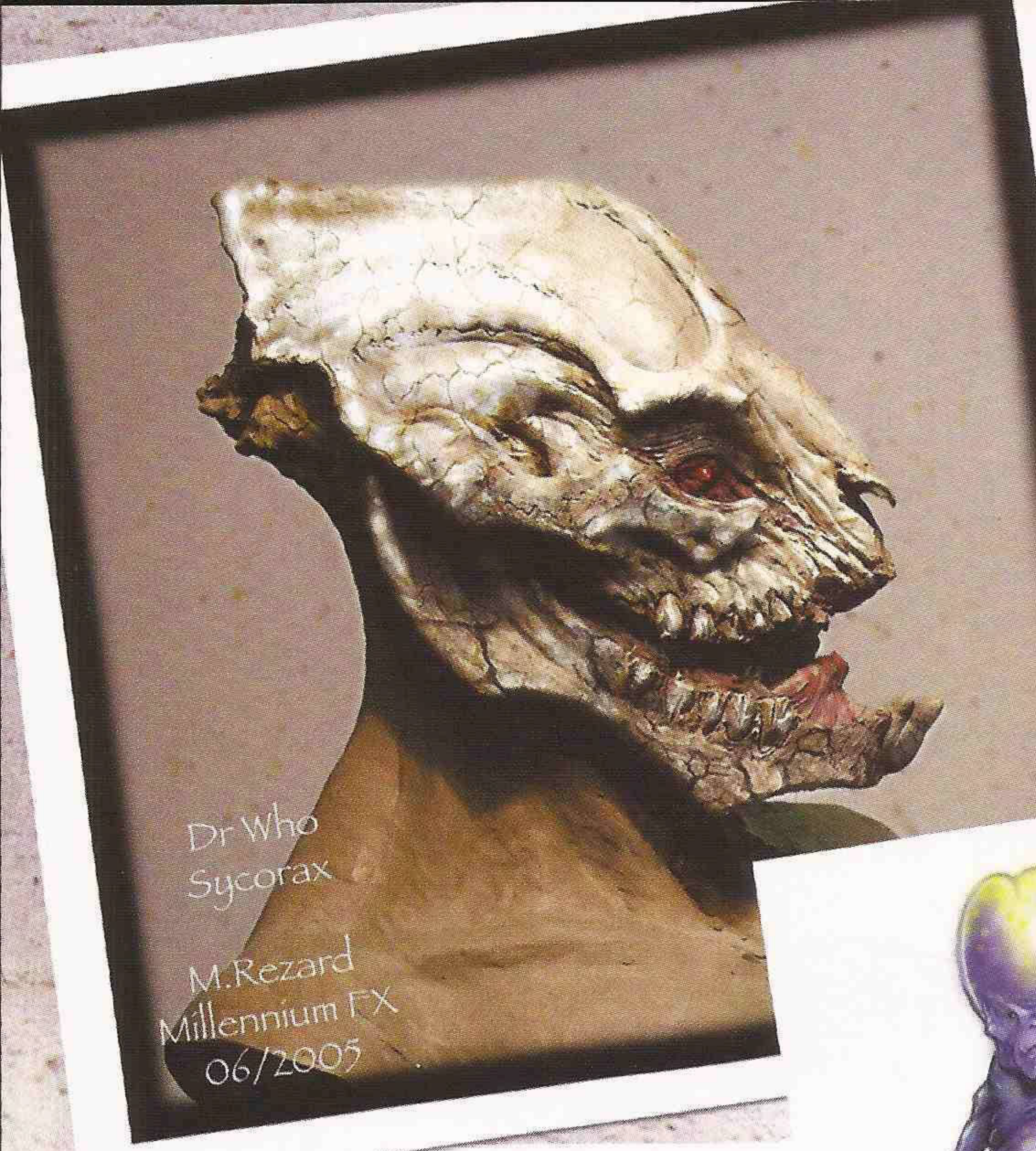
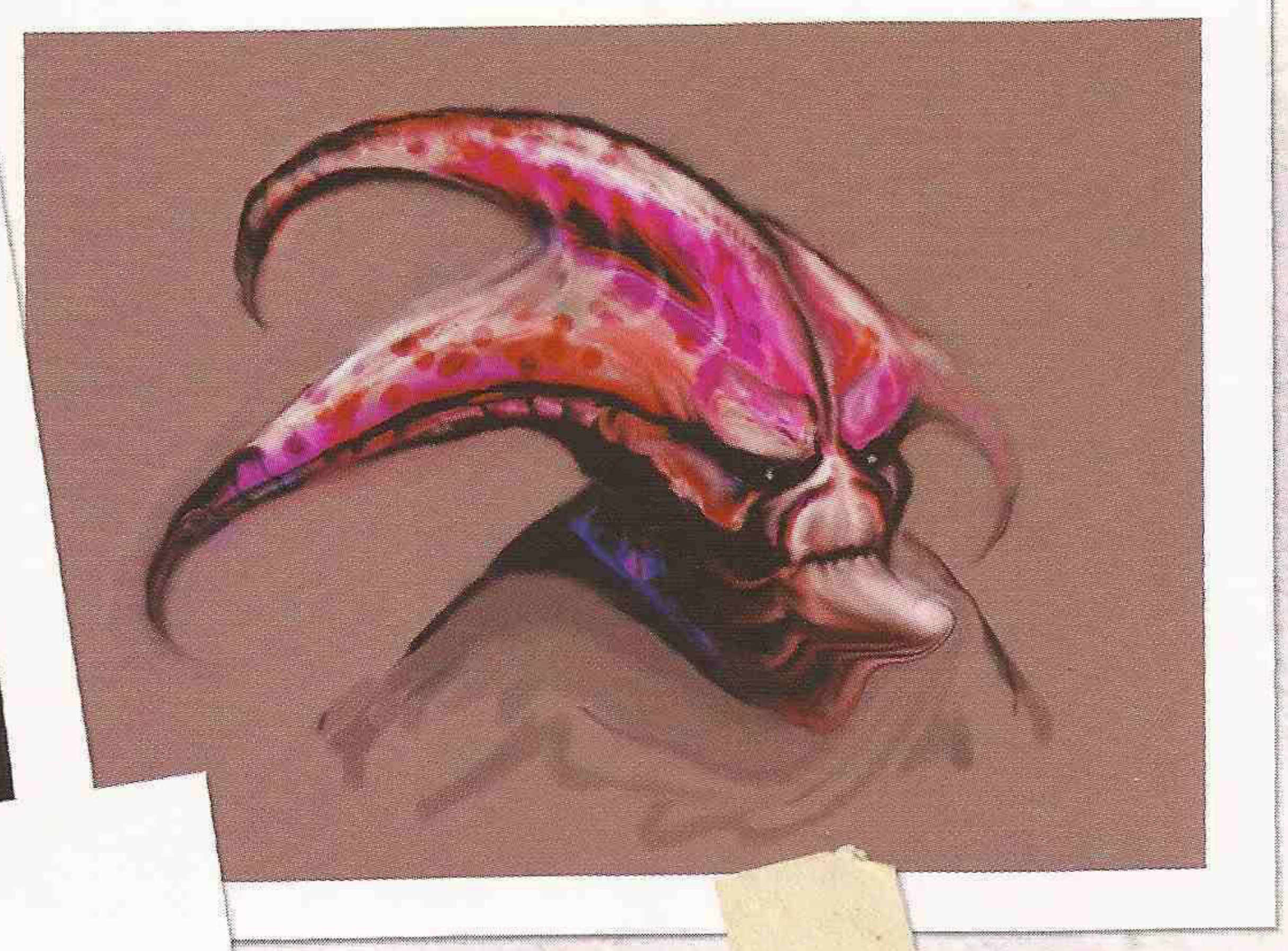
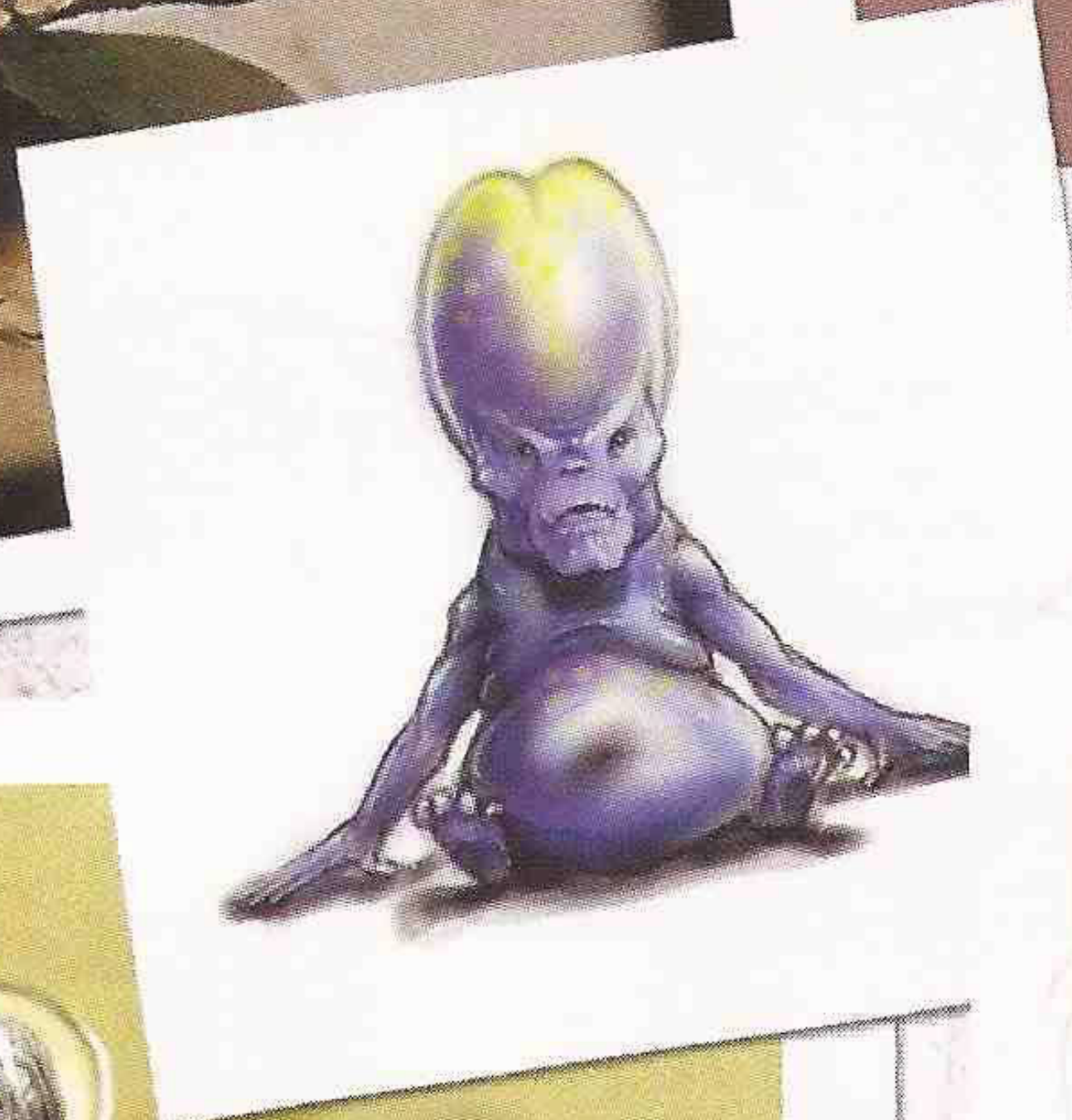
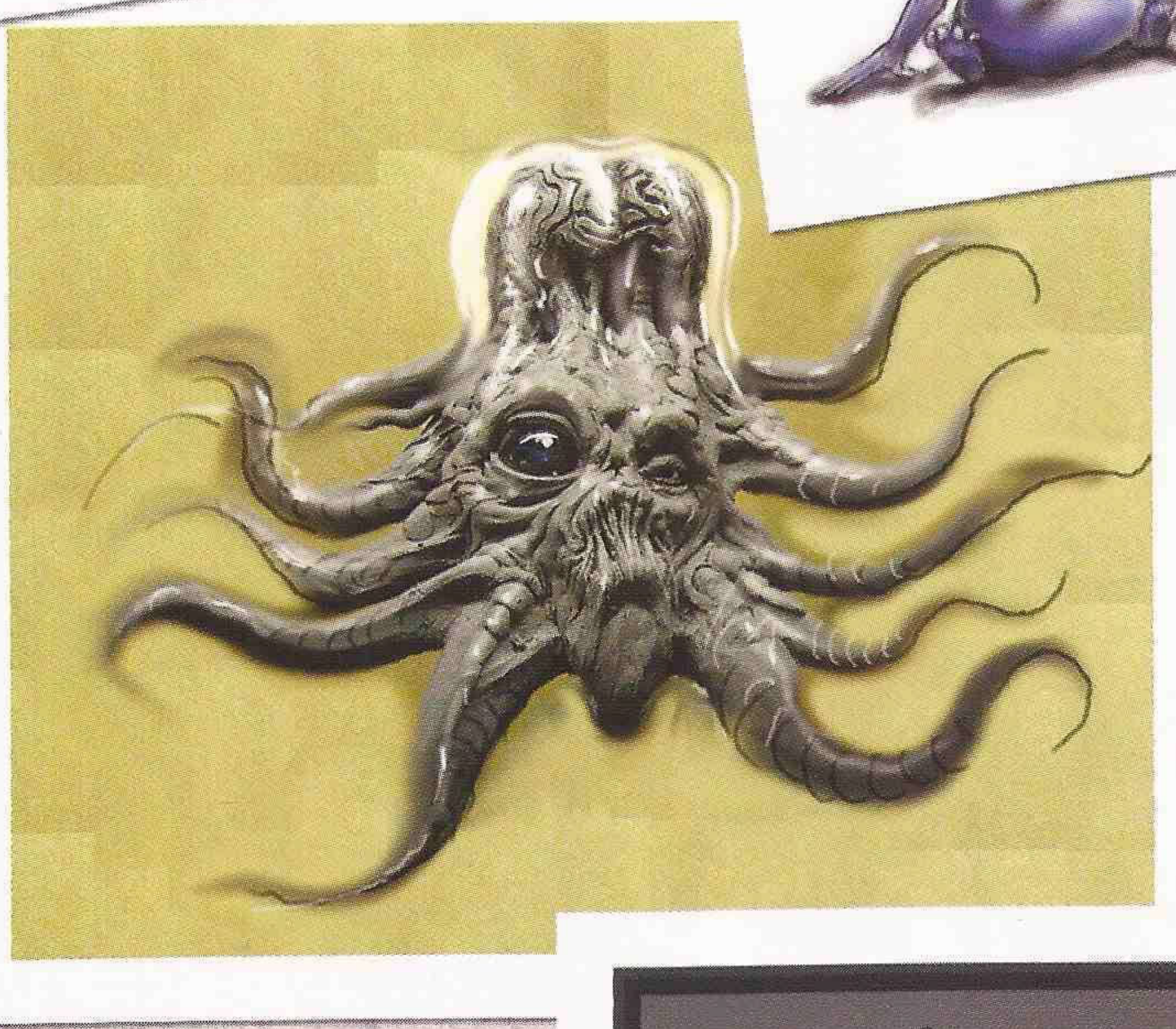
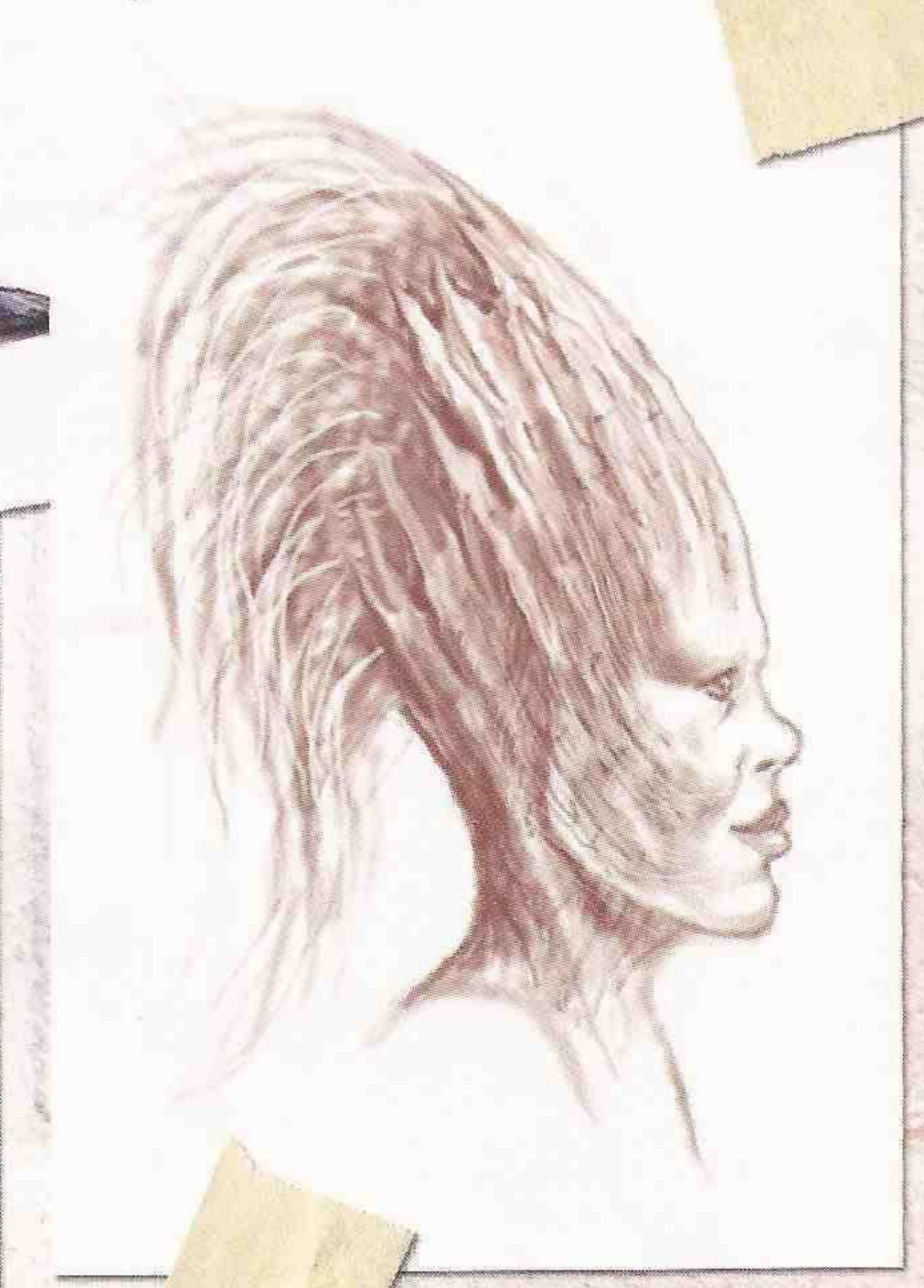
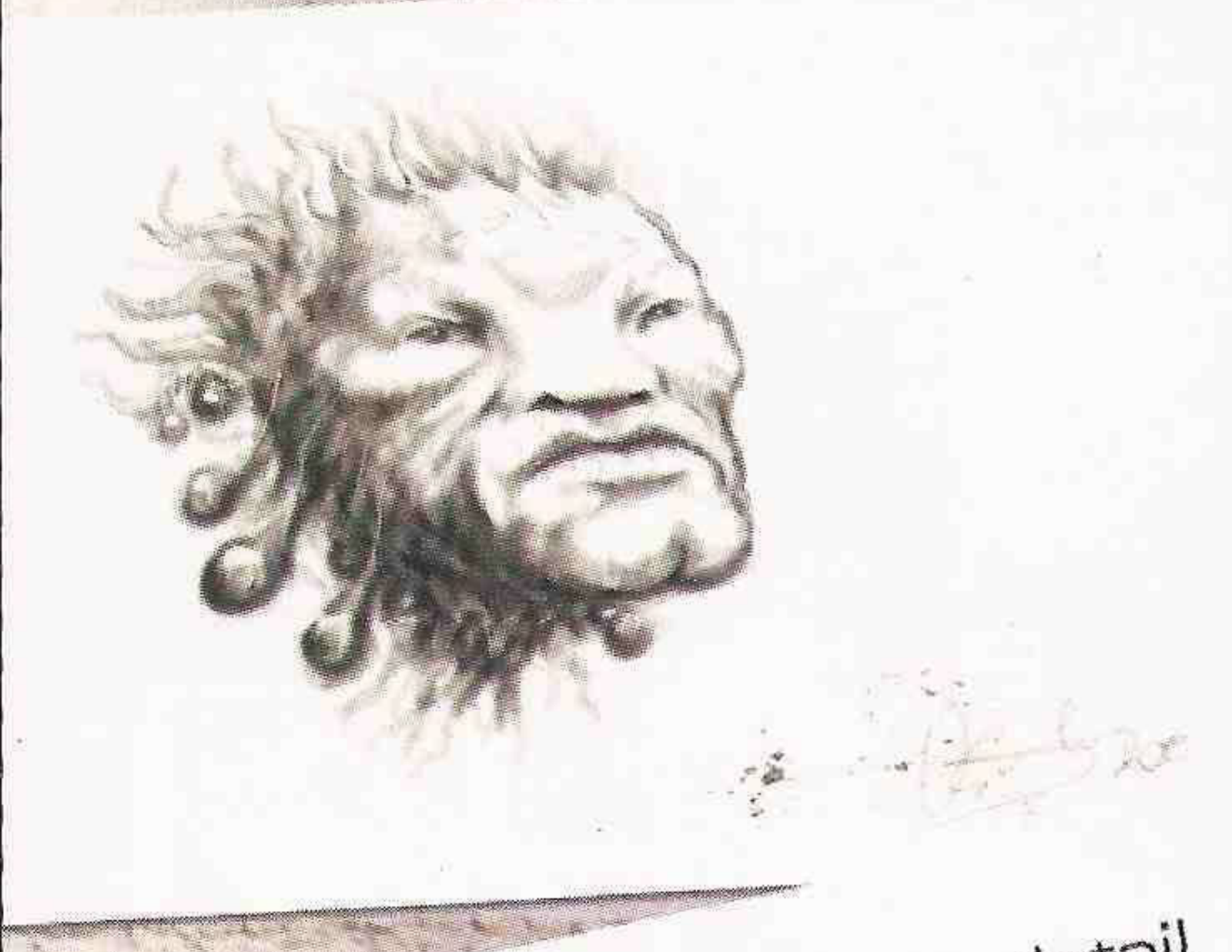


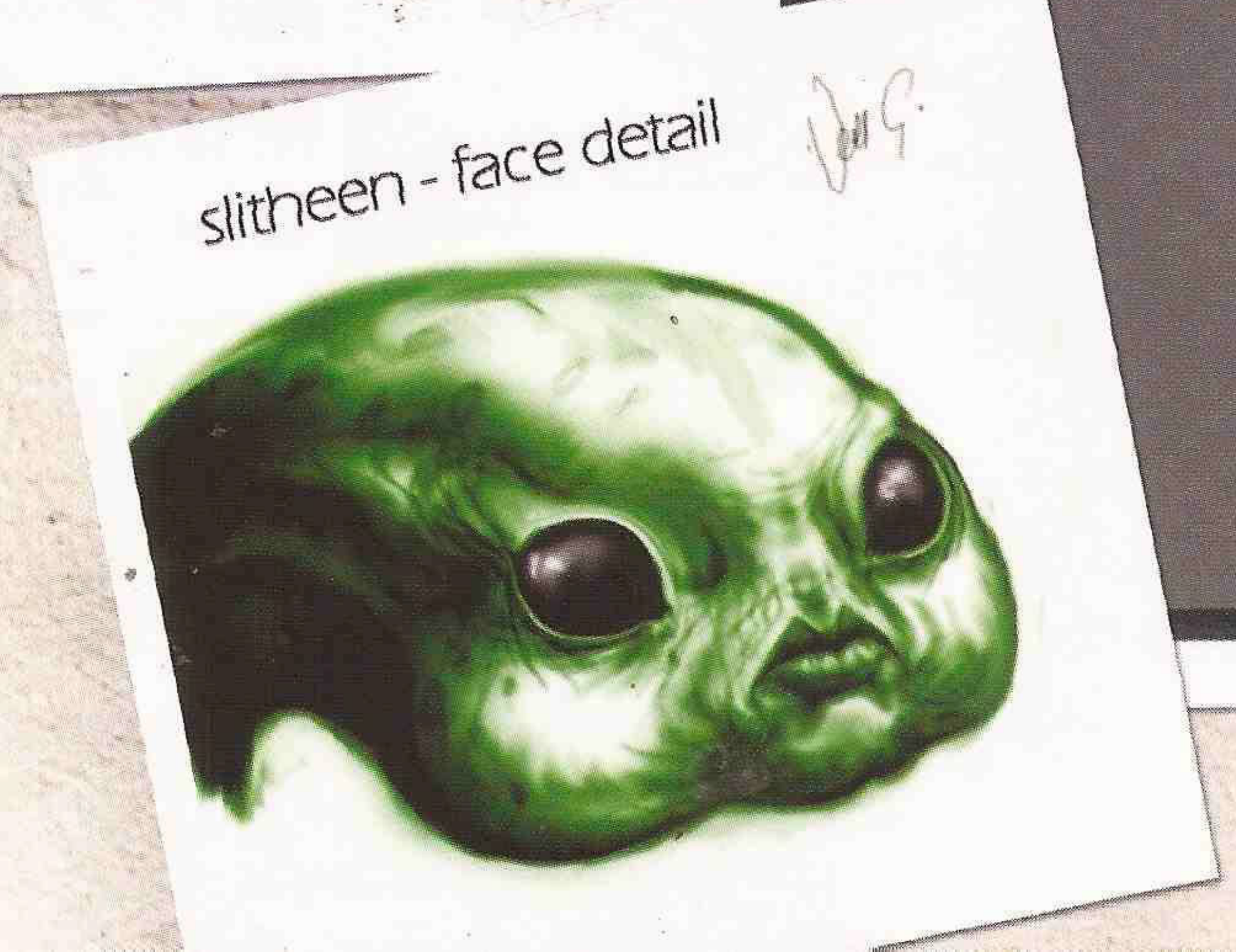


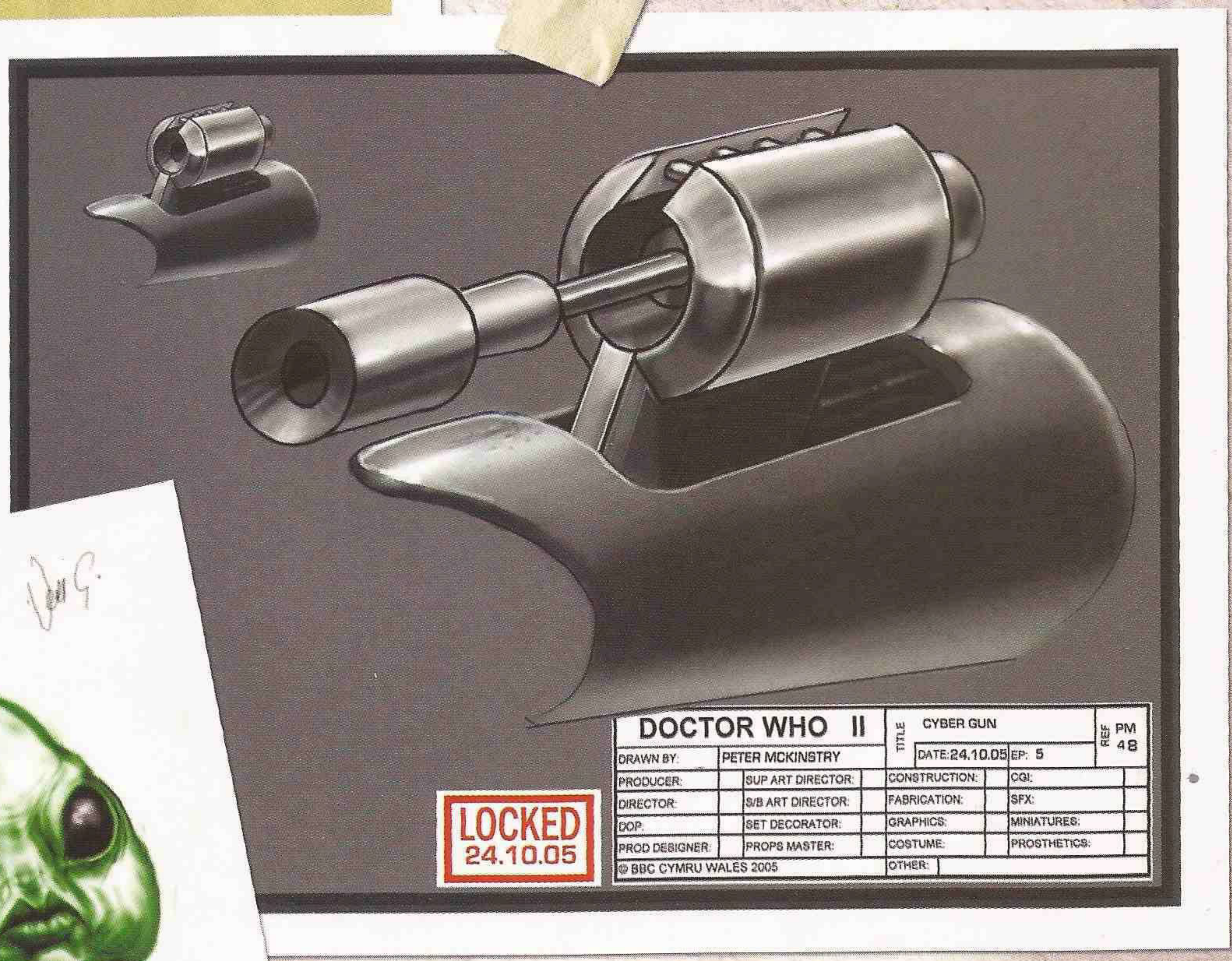












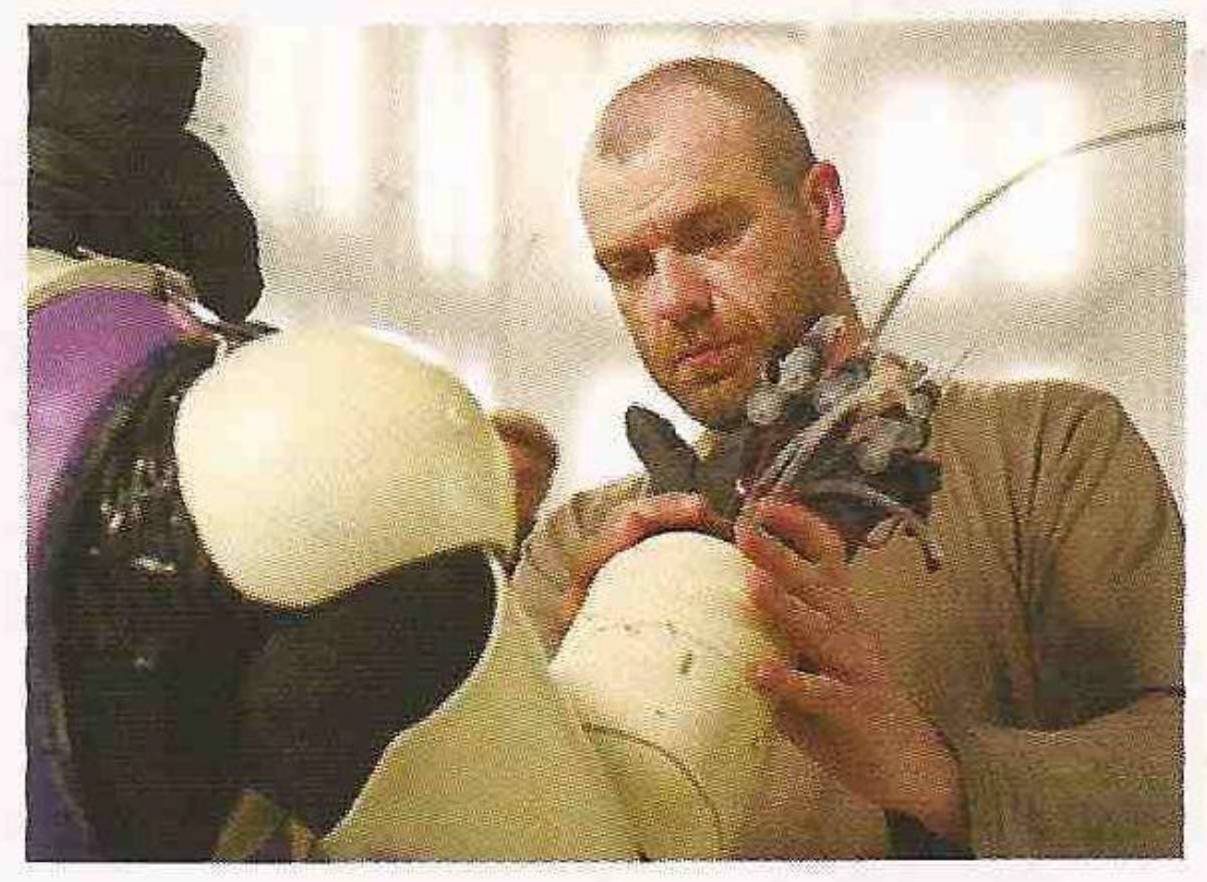
Creature Feature

Jason Arnopp steels himself to confront a terrifying array of alien nasties as he pays a visit to Millennium FX to meet to *Doctor Who*'s monster-maker **Neill Gorton** and find out how the beasts are born...

The boy walked in through the TARDIS doors, then ran down the stairs. Gazing across the room, his jaw dropped at the sight of Davros. Even though the crippled old Kaled scientist appeared dormant and harmless, a chill trickled down the seven-year-old's spine, This bitter megalomaniac might be revived at any moment. The third eye would regain its glow. That wizened hand would twitch...

Neill Gorton was standing in Blackpool's *Doctor Who* Exhibition. He had marvelled at *Genesis of the Daleks* across a long string of Saturdays, as the smell of fish and chips filled the house. "*Doctor Who* was a big deal," says Neill. "We'd all sit around with our dinner, watching the show, getting tingles from the theme music and all that stuff. So the most amazing thing about the *Doctor Who* Exhibition was walking in and seeing those things from the telly. When you watch a TV show as a kid, you don't even think about these things being made – you think they just went and *got* a Cyberman! I loved Davros, so it was great – and scary – to see him sitting just across the room. I also realised that someone had to make this stuff for a living – and it had to be far more interesting than anything else you could do. I thought, 'Well, why can't *I* do that?'"

Why indeed? Neill Gorton now has his own company, Millennium FX, which handles *Doctor Who*'s prosthetic-based fun. They've made Cybermen, Autons, Slitheen, the Abzorbaloff and a whole host of other delights. Fans flock to the *Doctor Who* Exhibition, currently in Cardiff, to see Neill and co's handiwork. Talk about coming full circle.



Neill Gorton meets **DWM** in Millennium FX's headquarters. It's a large, unassuming warehouse building, halfway up a hill in the leafy suburbia of Chesham, Buckinghamshire – the kind of place where you can, and will, hear brass bands practising in drill halls. Millennium's labyrinthine workshops are littered with unnervingly realistic creations: everything from cute creatures to anatomically-correct, limbless corpses. Oh look, there's the Abzorbaloff. And a decapitated Ood.

Neill settles in a cluttered room – it used to be his office, he notes, with a wry smile. Now it's centre of operations for his many employees. A notice board bears cardboard folders labelled with the names of shows Millennium FX have been working on, including *Little Britain* (Bubble DeVere's fat-suit), *Bodies, The Catherine Tate Show* (make-up, including the foul-mouthed nan), *Torchwood* and of course *Doctor Who*. This latter folder, you notice, is fit to burst.

"There's the occasional block of *Doctor Who* when no prosthetics are needed at all," reminds Neill. "And obviously, *Doctor Who* isn't running all year round. But when it is running and it's busy, it covers 30 percent of what we do."

Sporting a healthy amount of dirt under his fingernails, Neill Gorton strikes you as a hands-on leader who will work until the job is done. As we'll shortly hear, the rigours of the *Who* schedule often test his endurance. Right now, though, he's trying to explain just what 'prosthetics' means in this age of diverse special effects.

"'Prosthetic' normally describes something you glue on a person, or an artificial limb," he considers. "But when it comes to building a robot costume, or even an animatronic Dalek creature, the word 'prosthetics' doesn't apply. It sounds like a bit of a mess, though, if you start saying, 'Well, we cover prosthetics, make-up effects, certain prop-making and animatronics'. It's all too much to fit on the credits! So it's best to just call it prosthetics. The work we do on *Doctor Who* covers everything from tiny little props to the giant Face of Boe."

He takes a second stab at a neat, soundbite definition. "It's generally anything that is not done on the computer, and more often than not worn by a person or operated by a person, and generally has some sort of organic element. But it also spills over into things like the gas masks which we provided for *The Empty Child*..."

When post-millennial *Who* began assembling its workforce, various folk recommended Millennium FX to producer Phil Collinson. In the blink of a Slitheen eye, Neill found himself attending an early *Doctor Who* tone meeting.

"I was delighted to get the commission," he says. "Then, after being delighted, there was suddenly the realisation of how many things had to be built very quickly indeed! In the first meeting for any block, Russell will try to sum up an episode with a word. In that meeting, though, we looked at the whole series, examining videos of the new *Battlestar Galactica, Smallville, The West Wing* and all sorts of things, just so there's a visual reference. We looked at the way they used light, the way they used colour, the pace... Then Russell summed up the whole series with the word 'fun'. That tells you everything you need to know, doesn't it?"

The production team had no doubt been impressed with Neill's long CV. A Liverpool lad, he'd wasted little time in embarking on his chosen career, ▶

Monster mash!

We run a few classic *Doctor Who* adversaries past Neill Gorton. Would he like to update them if they ever returned to the series, hmm?

Zygons

"I just love them – they were so well-executed. The whole pug-face thing – to me, they epitomise *Doctor Who* monsters. With that kind of design, you look at it and think, 'I wouldn't change a whole heap on that'. They were so well-done, you'd be hard pushed to do anything better these days."

So you're happy to let Zygons be Zygons? Cough.

"Ha ha. I can tell why *you're* a journalist..."

Morbius

"That one really stuck in my mind when I was a kid – it also scared the hell out of me! There was something very freaky about that creature. It did my head in. Out of all the *Doctor Who* monsters over the years this is the one I wouldn't change a bit. I love it. A true monstrosity of a monster.""

Giant Maggots

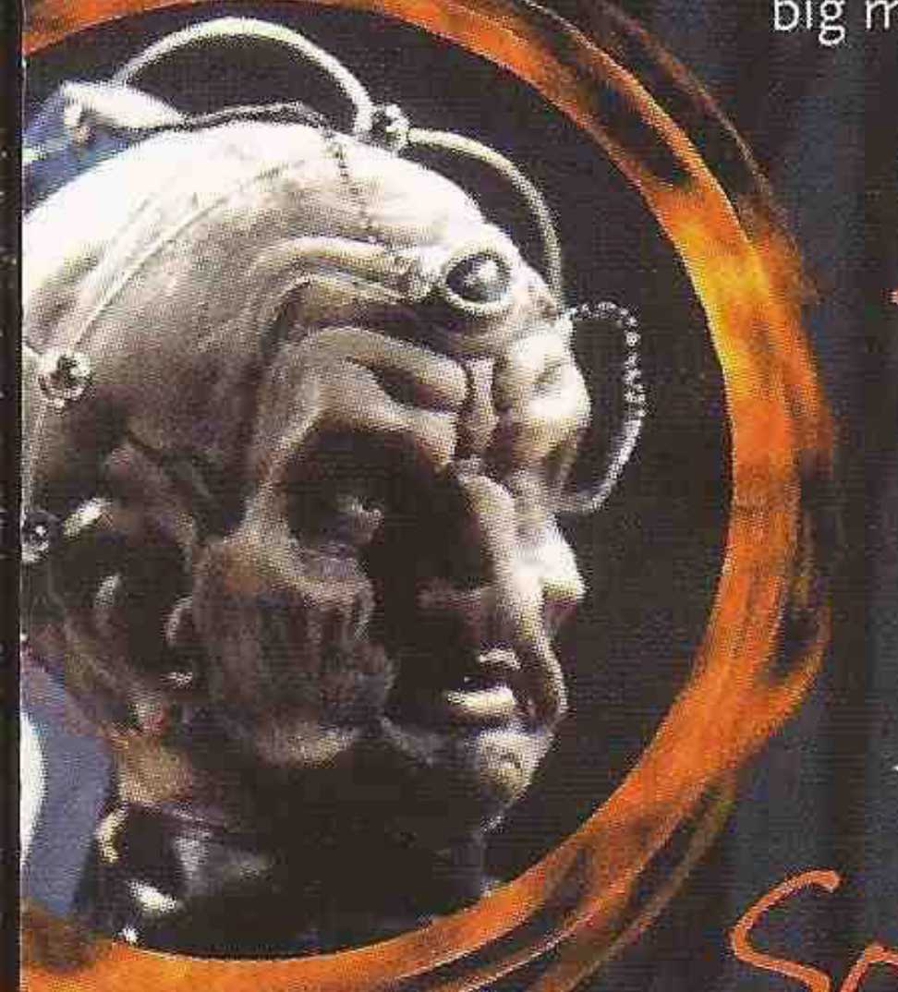
"A bit dull, really. I could do a nice animatronic and make the skins more translucent but at the end of the day it's still just a big maggot. In the whole *Doctor Who* universe there's so many great ideas and concepts for aliens and monsters that I think I'd be a bit disappointed to have to make a bunch of big maggots..."

Sea Devils

"For some reason... giant turtles with string vests on don't really float my boat! With some creatures, you can get a picture in your head as to how you'd update something. But these ones just never fired me up in the first place."

Evrato

"Ha ha! To be honest, when you look back, *Doctor Who* has some of the worst creatures you've ever seen in your life, but it also has some of the best. It's an odd thing – in a way, I think the audience kind of *likes* that. You never knew what you were going to see, once the monster was revealed. A lot of that variation was down to the way that the BBC functioned back then – they let everyone do everything."



Davros

"I'd kill to do Davros. He was such a great combination of make-up and the Daleks themselves. I could update him with modern materials – silicone gels and stuff."

Sontarans

"They were just so bizarre. They had budgetary and technical restraints, you could see that – but you could really do something awesome with them now."

Ice Warriors

"I've very little interest in the Ice Warriors, to be honest – cue a hail of half-bricks from irate fans! I always thought they looked a bit pantomime with their comical claw hands and slightly clumsy overall look. If I had to, I would upset everyone by doing a complete ground-up re-design."

practically from the first year his family made that end-of-Summer pilgrimage to Blackpool. He initially explored the pleasures of stop-animation, ploughing his way through plasticine and Super 8 film. A pivotal realisation soon dawned: "You can shoot that stuff for hours and hours, then send the film away and find you've completely underexposed it. Whole days could be wasted. Whereas if you stick something on someone's face it's *there!* It became far more fun to make things that physically existed."

As the young Gorton's effects horizons broadened, his folks were encouraging. "No-one told me I was wasting my time," he recalls. "I think that was because I was being quiet, rather than out nicking hub-caps!"

Plasticine, plaster, latex, clay and glue all contributed to ruining carpets, however. The teenager was soon turfed out of his bedroom and into the potting shed. "I had my own laboratory!" he laughs. "Great!"

Armed with a portfolio largely full of "friends with things glued to their faces," Dr Gortonstein fired off letters to important folk. He worked for *The Elephant Man*'s designer Chris Tucker, as well as Brit horror effects guru Bob Keen. The latter sent Neill to Los Angeles to work on 1988's *The Unholy*, where he quite literally made an arse of himself.

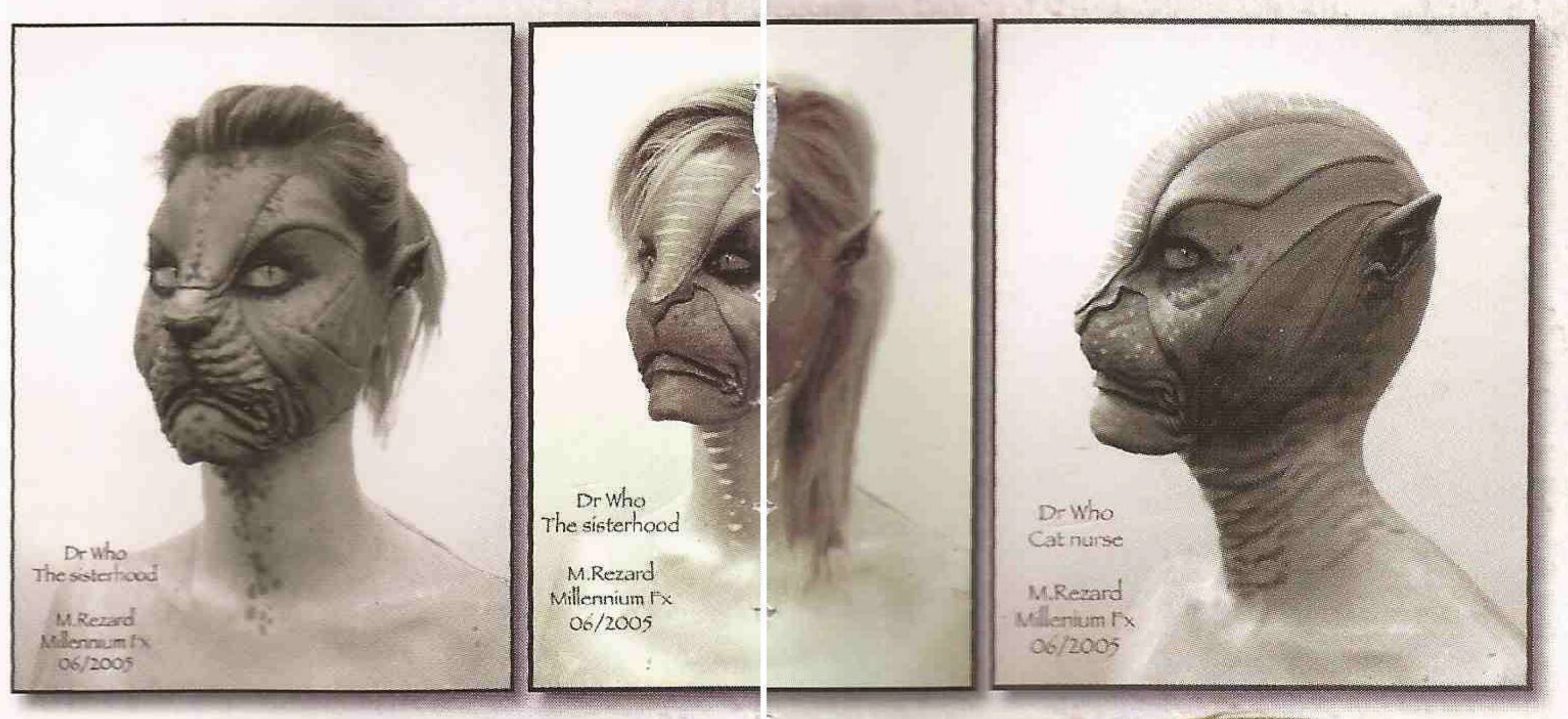
"I found myself making the main creature, building the animatronics and was inside the thing as well! I was half of a creature, lumbering up the aisle. There was one guy at the front and I was at the back, so I got dubbed 'The Bum-holy'..."

As the 1990s rolled in, Neill enjoyed a blizzard of TV work, creating props and effects for the likes of *Harry Enfield and Chums*, *Mr Bean*, *Red Dwarf*, *Space Precinct* ("I did the alien of the week") and *Father Ted* ("animatronic crows, attacking priests!").

After starting his own company with business partner Steve Painter – the catchily-named Gorton-Painter Effects – Neill went from fabricating a Christmas turkey stuck on Mr Bean's head, to various soldiers minus heads for *Saving Private Ryan*'s gory battle sequences. The fact that he thrives on such variety makes him ideal for *Doctor Who*. "I've got an attention span of, like, *that*," he says, snapping his fingers, "so I like the quick turnaround. My idea of hell is spending a year on one film, doing one make-up."

In 2000, Neill bought out Painter and went solo: Millennium FX was born. One of their first jobs was The Hughes Brothers' gory movie *From Hell*. "It was bloody marvellous," he says, aware of the pun, then shows me a folder full of explicitly nasty images from the movie. He's not squeamish, then? "I *am*, actually," he laughs. "I hate looking at all the pathology books – it turns my stomach..."

Neither does it do Neill Gorton's stomach much good to remember the time he fell asleep at a *Doctor Who* production meeting, early in Series One. He and his intrepid crew had been working on the Slitheen for two solid nights, with virtually no sleep. That morning, they had piled the creatures into a van and driven to Wales.

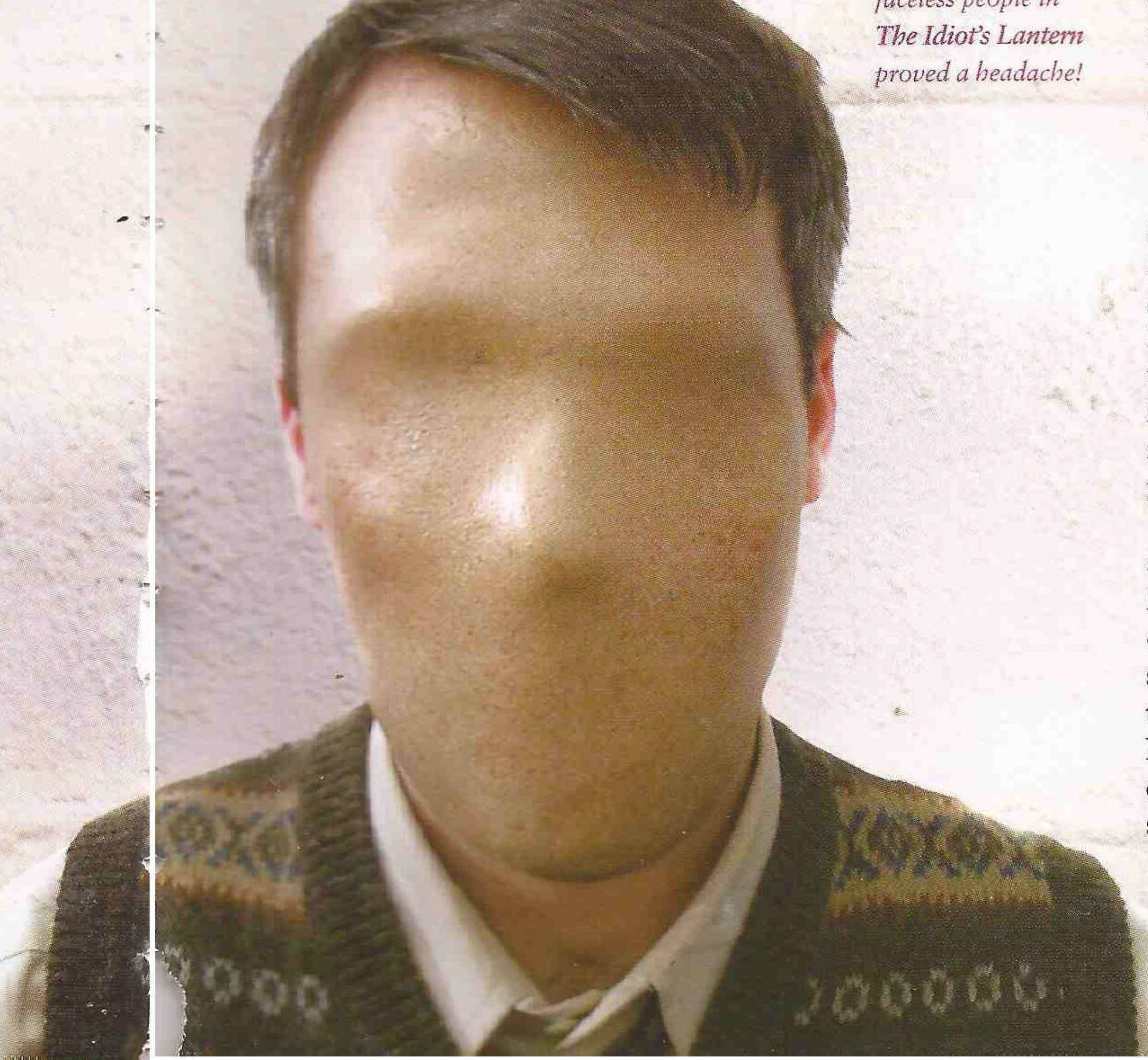


▲ *Top: Designing the Slitheen.*

▲ *Above: Eek! It's the Myrka.*

◀ *Left: Early Cat Nun designs.*

▼ *Below: The faceless people in The Idiot's Lantern proved a headache!*



"I literally fell asleep in the corner of the meeting, holding my notepad," he winces. "They'd gone off the subject of effects, talking about costumes and I was just *gone*!"

As proud as he is of the Slitheen, the fiercely self-critical Neill admits to being "disappointed" with their appearance in *Aliens of London* and *World War Three*. "Elements frustrated me – we didn't get a chance to road-test them before the first day of shooting. We had four weeks from start to finish. That's not a lot of time if you're building one of them. We had to do *three* so it was all a bit fraught and difficult."

At one point as sleep deprivation began to take its toll, and his Slitheen were whisked to the set with paint still fresh, the word 'Myrka' echoed through Neill Gorton's tortured brain. Would the Slitheen end up resembling that uncelebrated monster from 1984's *Warriors of the Deep*?

"The Myrka really was a comedy green pantomime horse," he smiles fondly. "There were points with the Slitheen where I was thinking, 'I'll never live this one down'. For *Boom Town*, we tidied up all the little joins and things that had been bugging us. We worked out the movement better and Russell e-mailed me to say it worked so well in that episode."

While Neill has nothing but admiration for Christopher Eccleston, he reveals that the Ninth Doctor demonstrated yet another talent on-set... for breaking props. "If you want to break something, give it to Chris," Neill grins. "He doesn't deliberately do it: it's just that he's acting, trying to sell a performance. He's definitely not worrying about how fragile a prop is – he's doing everything he can to make it look brilliant, which includes smashing things to pieces! Our animatronic Auton arm was really hanging in rags by the end of its scenes in *Rose*, but it did what it had to do. We did a couple of repairs in between takes, putting it back together."

How does Mr Tennant compare? "We haven't had to give David anything yet. He's still on a probationary period!"

Millennium's biggest challenges, across both series, have involved featureless humanoids: the Autons of *Rose* and the faceless folk of *The Idiot's Lantern*.

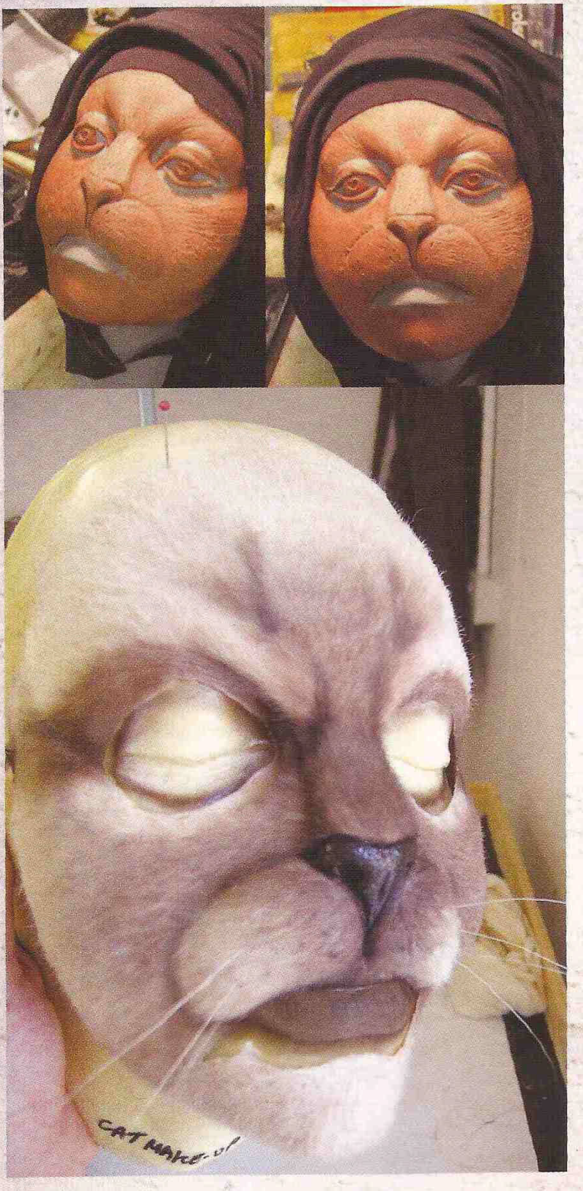
"Autons were tough to do, because people didn't want to see any joins or holes," he admits. "So the questions were, 'How do I get the mask on their heads? How do I let them breathe? How do they see?' That became one of the biggest pains in the arse of the whole series. Then, in the very first meeting I had with Phil on Series Two, he showed me a little breakdown of possible Things To Do. One of them was 'People with no faces (twenty of)'. Bloody nightmare!"

You must be on a constant search for extras with small noses...

"Yes. Who aren't claustrophobic! There was a classic, with the Cybermen. We had a Cyberman fitting day, trying costumes on people. One guy turned up, tried the body suit on and everything was going fine. Then we brought out the helmet and he went, 'Oooh! No, I can't wear *that*... I'd be terribly claustrophobic. I can't even get on a tube train!'. And it's like, 'Hang on pal, have you never seen a Cyberman before?' So he got his coat..."

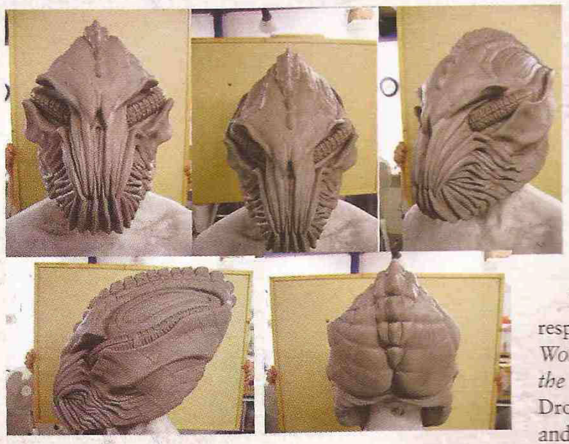
An actor's ability to see, or lack of it, is a constant issue. Will this change as technology evolves?

"Well, you could install mini cameras ▶



▲ *Above: Cat Nun and Sycroax sculpts and an early design for New Earth's plague carriers.*

Dr Who
ep1
Patient
M.Rezard
Millennium FX
2005



and monitors, but it's still only creating a 2D image, in one direction. We're constantly being asked if things can look a certain way, but with more visibility. To do that, you'd need a great big slot going 'round, rather than two eye-holes.

"I doubt anyone's gonna invent something that looks like metal from the outside, yet is completely see-through from the inside," he adds. "For one thing, we'd probably be the only customers! So for the moment we'll have to deal with the fact that there are two holes in a Cyberman's head, and that's all you're getting! And when you want them to march, it's gotta be in a V-formation, cos that's the only way they can see each other."

Did you have the same problem with the weird and wonderful Ood in Series Two's Satanic two-parter?

"Yeah. Problem is, if people can see out that well, you're gonna be able to see *them!* So you've got to find a middle ground. The Ood worked really well. You're always gonna have some issues, but never to the point where it becomes impossible to film.

▼ *Below: Creating and dressing Trin-E.*

"Design-wise with the Ood, Russell wrote a description of an albino with a red gash in the face, which looks like a sea anemone hanging out. You can see how that just followed on. We'll do some pictures, tweak them in Photoshop, send it to Russell and tweak it again. We'll also do clay sculptures, three or four inches high. That way, you can show it from different angles, rather than having to do four different drawings."

The Ood must have been a challenging job: they needed to look both evil and benign.

"If they looked completely cute when they turned up, there's no threat. But if they were completely horrific, it would be hard to accept them as a servile race. So we went for something which was quite dehumanized, but quite... There's something cute about an Ood! We stayed away from a mouth and teeth, because that would immediately start to feel dangerous. An octopus looks a bit funny: you don't feel threatened by it, unless it's 100 feet long and dragging your ship down into the depths!"

Although Neill has yet to revive his old favourite Davros, he came close while designing the amorphous mass which lurks within a Dalek's casing. Settling at a PC, he shows me his early sketch, which gave the creature more traditional features, not unlike Davros at all.

"I liked the idea of there being something sort of humanoid in there, but Russell said no, it had to be a big eye with tentacles," he says. "I initially thought that was really 1950s, but went with variations on it and it all came together great. I took Russell's octopus thing then tried to get a face and brain in. There's an echo of a distorted mouth and face. It's not a one-eyed creature: it once had two, but one of them's just gone..."

Having designed this tentacled fiend, Millennium's sole responsibilities for *Bad Wolf* and *The Parting of the Ways* were the Anne Droid, and the Trin-E and Zu-Zana 'bots.

"They were meant to look very fun, with funky skirts. They were great to make, too, seeing as they had weapons: chainsaws and all sorts. They also got blown up at the end, which I'm sure we'd all like to happen to their real selves!"

"Series One was everybody's big learning curve," Neill continues. "We were all trying very hard, getting to know each other... it's a terribly difficult thing, to start a new show like that. Even though *Doctor Who* had been going forever, these were almost entirely new people and the show had changed. Now, if someone comes on board, they've got two seasons for reference..."

Neill's particularly glad to have forged such a strong relationship with CGI wizards The Mill.

"It's fabulous. We know each other now, and I'm on the phone to the Mill's Will Cohen a lot, batting ideas around. Sometimes there's a fear that CG guys want to do everything digitally: those guys don't. I love digital work and what it can do, including how it can enhance some of my stuff, like the Slitheen's eye blinks. I'd be an idiot to say I'd rather do that stuff mechanically."

Asked whether he wishes his team had handled any Series One CG work themselves, he mentions the Reapers of *Father's Day* – again showing me an early design, which made the creatures more closely resemble their namesake. "I thought they could have been something very dark, but it was probably much better to do them with CGI. I would also have loved the Moxx of Balhoon to be floating – hovering around on a disc. That would've been so cool! But the CG boys just had so much on with *The End of the World*. It would have been a bridge too far."

So was there anything in Series Two which Neill wishes he'd, ahem, got his paws on?

"You're not being too subtle there," he laughs. "Yes, the werewolf! To be honest, we were gutted, not to be doing it. At the start of the year, we read the list of things to be done for Series Two and thought, 'Werewolf! Fantastic! That's obviously going to be a prosthetic, animatronic creature. Everyone was buzzing and excited, so you can imagine how our hearts sank when it became CGI.

"It was also odd that in the same block we were doing the clockwork droids for *The Girl in the Fireplace*," he adds. "I thought it would've made more sense for us to be doing fleshy things, while The Mill did robots. But both droids and werewolf looked great. Straight after we saw clips of the werewolf at the press launch, Will Cohen and Dave Houghton immediately asked me, 'Well? Well? What do you think?' I told 'em it was great. We'd made such a big issue out of who was gonna do it, that they then felt really under pressure!"

"That was really the only case where there was a clash of opinion over how something should be achieved," he stresses. "As Russell said, we're lucky to be in a position where we can *have* that argument! It's a luxury for production to pick and choose between people who are fighting over something."

What did Millennium and the Mill collaborate best on, in Series Two?

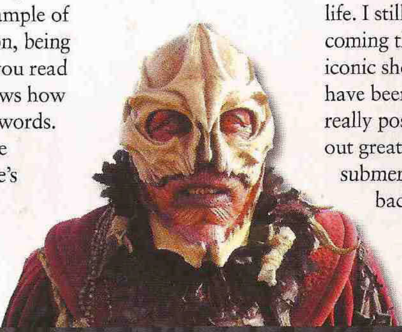
"I stopped collaborating with those sods," he chuckles. "No, one thing we found, after the Slitheen chaos, was it was best not to intercut between real and CG things. Or we do it in a clever way. The Mill did CG Cybermen, for instance, which allowed us to have wider marching shots. There's that lovely *Terminator 2*-style shot they did, with the Cyber mask coming down on the face. Fabulous. Also, good on 'em for the CG Daleks they did for those last two episodes. Flawless: they'd really refined it this time."

Neill remembers feeling "very relieved," as he and his team started work on Series Two.

"We were starting as Series One had hit the air, with success. I thought, 'Thank Christ for that – it was worth the stress!' That made you a lot more comfortable, going into the second one. Everyone was a bit more in their stride and more relaxed: and it shows in the work. We had a cracking start on *The*

Christmas Invasion, with the Sycorax."

These barbaric yuletide spoilsports, Neill notes, "were our first example of proper blokes-with-make-up-on, being monsters. What's great when you read Russell's scripts, is that he knows how to sum up something in a few words. You instantly get a picture. The Sycorax was "head like a horse's skull" and it was like, bingo. I did a doodle, it was sculpted in clay, we photographed that and presented it at the next meeting. Russell said it was like we reached in and took it out of his head. Sean Gilder was a great actor – really into playing the role, which always helps – and a lovely guy.



"After that, of course, we did the cat nuns for *New Earth*. Those brought about my favourite compliments, when people thought they were CGI faces. But it was all make-up: nothing to do with computers."

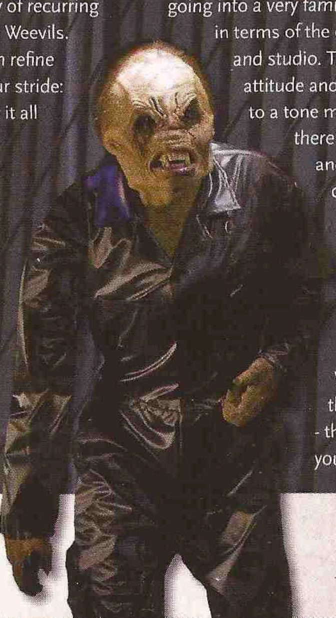
While Neill was delighted to land the job of resurrecting the Cybermen, he confesses there was a point where he almost lost faith in his own steel giants...

"I found that first press photograph of a Cyberman a little deflating, after all the hard work we'd put in. Look, I was present at the photo shoot and fully understood the need to grab a shot to stop the press hounding, but... I know some fans were sitting there, going, 'Hmm, not sure'. And I was too! The Cybermen almost had to grow on me again. And they really did, as soon as I saw the footage. How Graeme Harper had shot them was just fantastic. Suddenly they had a whole new lease of life. I still get a chill, every time I see them coming through the windows. A really iconic shot. Of course, the Cybermen have been massively popular with a really positive reaction, so it all turned out great. It's just that when you're so submerged in it, you don't get to stand back and get perspective."

For *Army of Ghosts* and *Doomsday*, of course, the Cybes were packin'... "They always ▶

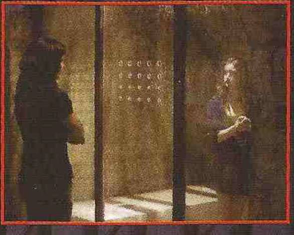
TORCHWOOD

'Working on *Torchwood* is a lot less intensive than *Doctor Who*. For one thing, you never leave Earth, so you'll never have a space station full of aliens walking around. We've also got more in the way of recurring characters, with the Weevils. That means you can refine masks. Get into your stride: fix, tweak and make it all really nice.

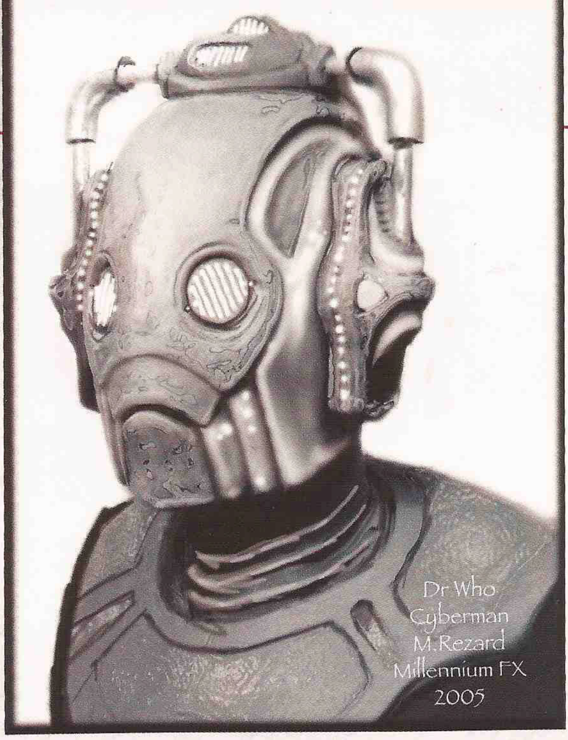


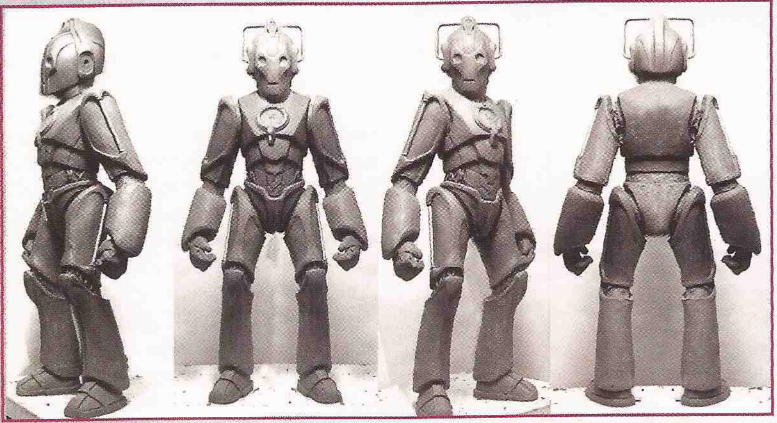
"On top of that, we're able to chuck a bit of blood and gore around! You don't have one eye on the fact that it's going out on Saturday primetime. It's after the watershed, so if the script says, 'A Weevil bites someone', then that's great. We'll get the blood-pump and see how far we can squirt it! You've got a little more latitude in the design work.

"It's very easy to slip into *Torchwood*, because it's such comfortable surroundings. We're going into a very familiar territory, in terms of the crew, location and studio. There's a nice attitude and vibe: you go to a tone meeting and there's Russell and Julie. But creatively, it's like being given a new palette to paint with. You've got to keep *Doctor Who* slightly on the lighter side - there's a place you can't go to.



A few times, I've wanted to make stuff darker, but that's not the show we're making. Everyone involved with the show gelled under that one idea of 'fun', so I'm proud that we didn't forget ourselves. We tried to honour what the show was about and design accordingly. You couldn't see the Abzorbaloff in *Torchwood*, or the Weevils in *Doctor Who*. Put *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood* together, though, and you've got all bases covered, from our point of view. For instance, we've got a body in the warehouse, completely stripped of flesh. And that's going off to *Torchwood*..."





had the gun-arms," says Neill. "Those were just saved for the last two episodes to show the Cybermen's progression. They had a new toy! We made a couple of extra Cybermen to be blown up, too."

Neill can't take credit for the Dalek-suckered corpse of Doctor Singh, however: "I think that was an old runner who was found rotting under the set!"

I wonder though, did Neill ever expect to build a *Doctor Who* monster to the specifications of a competition-winning *Blue Peter* viewer?

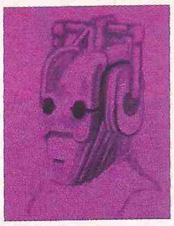
"Uh, no. And especially one to stick on Peter Kay! Talk about left-field. The Abzorbaloff was a real fun one. I was at the *Blue Peter* studios when the character was picked, so I knew what I was in for! It was a case of, 'Okay, this has been drawn brilliantly by a young boy. Now, what would it look like if drawn by an adult?' William Grantham's idea was lovely and we tried to hold as many of his elements as possible. Everyone pretty much felt we'd got it right. "

Because it was never specified exactly how the winning monster would be used in the series, Neill assumed it would be a walk-on, walk-off character. As we saw in *Love & Monsters*, that wasn't to be.

"Me and Phil joked that we should choose a winning design which would only involve one prosthetic nose! But of course Russell picked a full-body creature, so it had to be a proper big build and be a main character. William said he thought it was great... although he'd imagined it being the size of a double-decker bus! Sadly, Peter Kay's only five-foot-eight."

What about *Love & Monsters*' Hoix, which gives the Doctor and Rose the runaround? Very impressive.

"It was a case of needing something to jump about," he shrugs. "All we did was sculpt a new head. There were no animatronics: just a mouth that opened and closed. We made it with lots of teeth, so when it opened, that said it all. Then it was all just other bits and bobs we had lying around. We expected it to just run through frame, but it ended up getting a lot of airtime! It's so funny, seeing people talking about the Hoix... you weren't supposed to particularly notice it!"



▲ *Above: Early Cybermen designs.*

◀ *Left: A finished Cyberman maquette, sculpted in clay.*

▼ *Below: The fearsome Abzorbaloff (Peter Kay).*

Neill Gorton's favourite Millennium-related *Who* product changes every five minutes. Right now, it's his team's work on forthcoming Christmas special *The Runaway Bride*.

"That episode will blow people away," he grins. "Just a fabulous one to do. I read the script and thought, 'Well, that'll be CGI'. But it didn't end up that way, which was a joy."

He throws us another Series Three titbit: "I was at the BAFTA Crafts Awards this year. I wasn't nominated for *Doctor Who*, but Edward Thomas [*Who's* production designer] and a couple of other people had been. I picked up an award for a show called *Help* which involved a lot of character prosthetics. Afterwards, Russell was quizzing me about these make-ups. So we now have old-age make-ups to do for one Series Three story. That's a direct result of Russell being at those Awards and taking note. He's found another use for me! It's really nice, because he's playing to the strengths of the team."

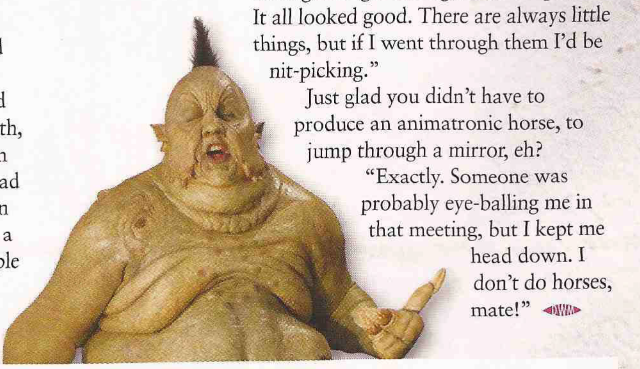
So amid all the glamour and fantastic achievements, does Neill harbour any regrets from his work so far on the show?

"Series One was full of regrets, in a way, but also full of joys," he ponders. "The Slitheen could have been very different. But at the same time, kids are mad about the Slitheen! My regrets, then, are really just technical. Because clearly we did *something* right! Kids think the Slitheen are big, green and funny. And they love 'em!

"With Series Two, I was just delighted that we're all on a good footing and managed to get through it in one piece. It all looked good. There are always little things, but if I went through them I'd be nit-picking."

Just glad you didn't have to produce an animatronic horse, to jump through a mirror, eh?

"Exactly. Someone was probably eye-balling me in that meeting, but I kept me head down. I don't do horses, mate!" DWM



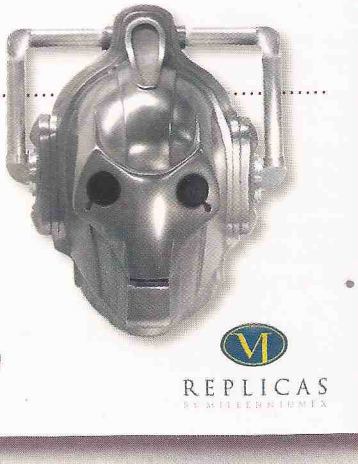
Win a Cyberman's head!

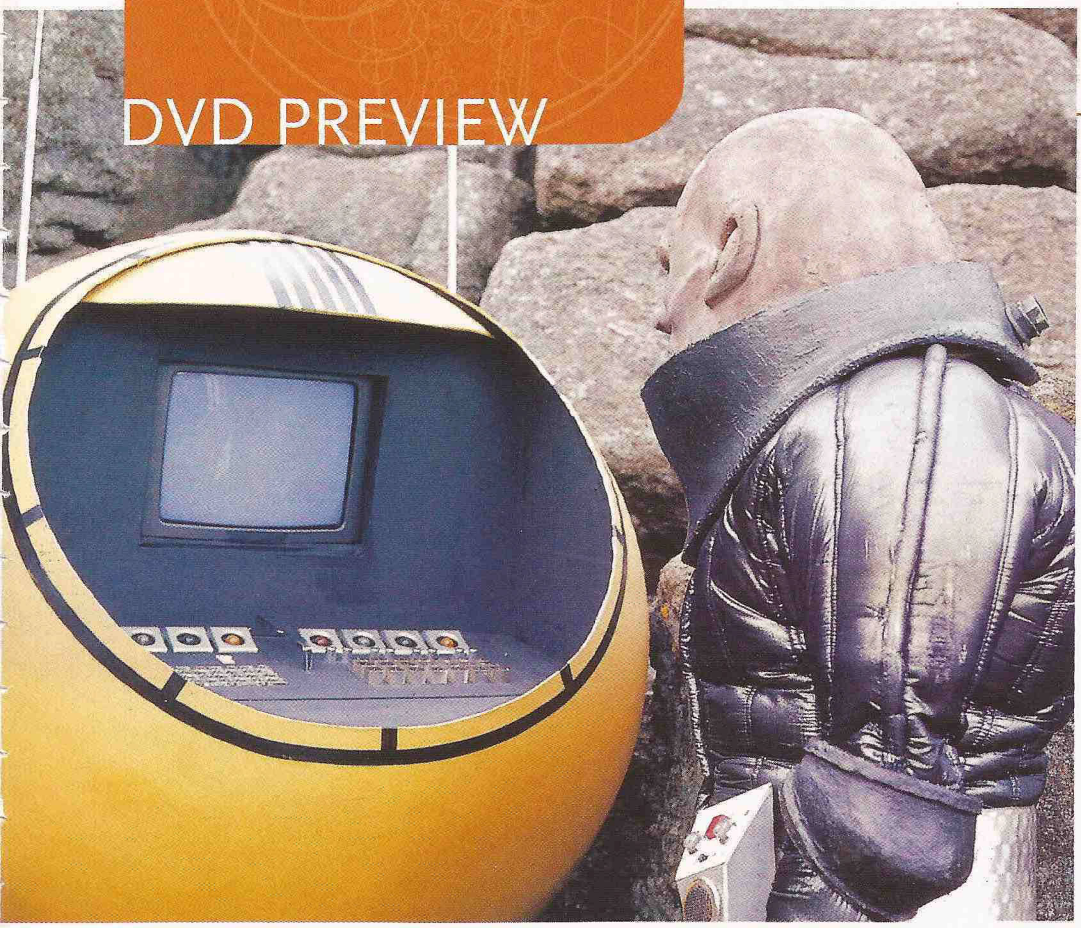
You've read about Millennium FX's fantastic creations: now here's a chance to proudly display one on your mantelpiece! Millennium are launching a company which will sell official, BBC-licensed replicas of various prosthetic pieces from *Doctor Who*. They will be taken from the original Millennium moulds and recreated to on-set standard. Look at *www.mfxreplicas.com* for more details.

To celebrate, Millennium FX are offering **DWM** readers a Cyberman head as first prize in our competition. Second prize is a Clockwork Droid Mask from *The Girl in the Fireplace*. Get in there! All you have to do is answer the following question:

On which 1998 Steven Spielberg movie did Millennium FX maestro Neill Gorton serve?

Write the answer on a postcard or sealed envelope, along with your name, home address, and daytime contact details, and post it to the **DWM** address on page 10. Mark your entry PLEASE HELP ME BREAK THE ICE AT PARTIES, and make sure it reaches us by 6 November. **DWM**'s decision will be final, and anyone requesting a cash prize alternative will be fed to the Hoix.





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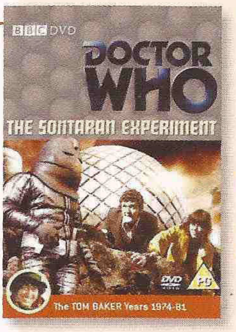


FEATURING
The Fourth Doctor (Tom Baker), Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen) and Harry Sullivan (Ian Marter)

WRITTEN BY
Bob Baker and Dave Martin

FIRST BROADCAST
22 February – 1 March 1975

THE STORY

Transporting down to Earth's surface from space station Nerva (following *The Ark in Space*), the Doctor, Sarah Jane and Harry find the planet desolate and seemingly deserted, only to discover that a group of shipwrecked astronauts have been lured there by a fake distress call. One of their number, Roth (Peter Rutherford), tells Sarah Jane of an alien conducting gruesome experiments on him and his crewmates.

The alien turns out to be a Sontaran, Field-Major Styre (Kevin Lindsay), who is compiling a report on human physical and mental capabilities as a prelude to an invasion of Earth...

EXTRA FEATURES

- Audio commentary featuring actress Elisabeth Sladen, co-writer Bob Baker and producer Philip Hinchcliffe
- Documentary – *Built for War: the Story of the Sontarans*
- Photo Gallery
- Production notes

THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT

DVD 2 | entertain | **CERT** PG | **PRICE** £12.99 RRP | **OUT** 9 October 2006 | **PREVIEW BY** David Darlington

THIS MONTH SEES THE FIRST RELEASE IN a new subset of the 'classic' *Doctor Who* DVD releases – as revealed in **DWM** 371, an extra four stories are to be issued each year. Some have taken to thinking of these as 'vanilla' releases – *ie* completely bereft of 'added value' material – but that's not really the case, as DVD producer Steve Roberts explains: "We're calling them 'Standard Editions' as opposed to the usual 'Special Editions'."

So what's the thinking behind this? It's exciting that we'll now be able to look forward to at least ten releases a year, but it would be a shame if it was at the expense of getting the lavishly restored episodes that we're used to...

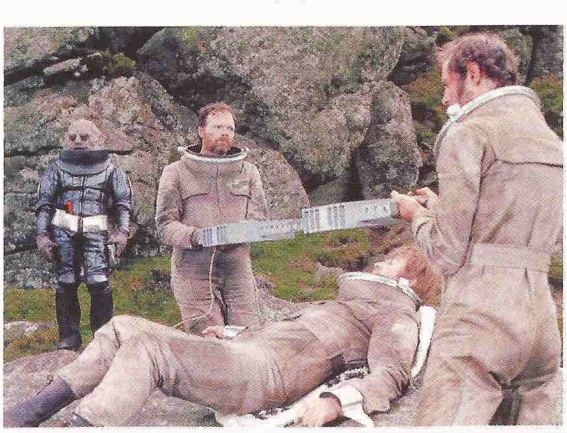
"Daniel Hall, our commissioning editor at 2|entertain, came up with the concept of the standard edition releases," Roberts reveals, "but specified that they should, as a minimum, be fully remastered, and have a commentary and subtitle production notes. We expanded on that slightly to allow for the possibility of a single featurette or trailer. As they're intended to be slightly cheaper than the Special Edition releases, we obviously have a smaller budget to work with anyway. We're looking at slotting in four Standard Editions into the schedule next year, as well as the normal six Special Editions."

The Sontaran Experiment is one of a handful of shorter *Doctor Who* stories, comprising only two 25-minute episodes, as opposed to the more common four- and six-parters. Is it likely that it will be these shorter stories which will form the bulk of the Standard Edition releases? "Not at all. Our schedule for the next couple of years includes at least one six-parter Standard Edition, as well as a two-parter Special Edition. It's all about the sort of extras we feel we can provide, not how long the story is."

The documentary here provides a broad overview of the monsters, rather than the making of the story itself. Is that an indication of how future releases will develop? "It was really down to [producers] Richard Molesworth and Steve Broster," says Roberts. "They came to me and suggested that it would be a perfect place to put a Sontaran feature. They know how to push my buttons!"

Steve Broster has been busy – this is the fourth release in a row for which he's provided a supporting feature. "I'd heard that 2|entertain was thinking of upping the release rate," says Broster, "and that the tester for this idea was to be *The Sontaran Experiment*. In fact, I think it's testing the viability of selling the two-part stories as stand-alone releases as well, and the original plan was for it just to have a commentary and a couple of off-the-shelf extras. I sensed that there might be a few punters out there disappointed with that, so Richard and I came up with a proposal for a documentary which wouldn't break the budget! I think any story could have a 'making of', and there's certainly enough in *The Sontaran Experiment* to talk about – but the idea we had was to make a Sontaran featurette. *Built For War* could as easily have been devised to go on *The Time Warrior* or *The Invasion of Time*, although if it had appeared on either of those, it would have been a very different programme; our new, slightly tongue-in-cheek Sontaran footage was shot to look like the 'future Earth' from this serial, with the Long Mynd in Shropshire doubling for Dartmoor. We also spend longer looking at *The Sontaran Experiment* than the others, so we get a sort of mini-'making of' within the piece.

> "We were lucky enough to engage the services of a real Sontaran, who asked to appear as himself!" DVD producer **Steve Broster**



"Because I was still working on *The Mark of the Rani* DVD, we agreed that Richard would handle the interviews – although fortunately, I'd been able to ask Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant some *Two Doctors* questions at the end of the *Rani* interviews – and I handled the post-production side of things. We were also lucky enough to engage the services of a real Sontaran – a Squadron Commander (retired) – who was so taken with the project, he asked to appear in it as himself. I initially turned down his kind offer, but relented after he offered to treat me to 'a painful and protracted death at the hands of the might of the Sontaran Empire'..." DWM

NOEL CLARKE
Mickey Smith
DAVID TENNANT
The Doctor
CAMILLE CODURI
Jackie Tyler
BILLIE PIPER
Rose Tyler
DOCTOR WHO II
59B
559
6

Backstage secrets

DOCTOR WHO CONFIDENTIAL

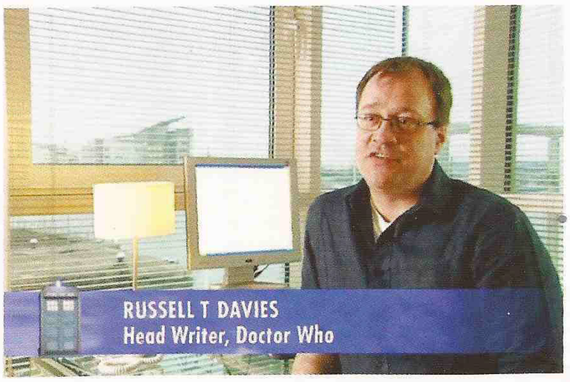
Directed by ADAM PAGE, ZOE RUSHTON, GEOFF EVANS | Broadcast Saturdays 15 April – 8 July 2006

THERE CAN'T BE MANY TV SERIES THAT can boast a 'Making Of' documentary that airs after every single episode, and even fewer that have a children's magazine programme dedicated to them as well. In fact, let's be honest, *Doctor Who*'s completely unique there. Last year's series of *Doctor Who Confidential* was very successful in taking a theme from that week's episode of *Doctor Who*, and examining how it had been tackled by the programme in earlier decades. In this regard *Confidential* acted as a good introduction to the world of *Doctor Who* for new viewers, as well as being a well-informed 'Making Of' in its own right.

This time the balance has changed somewhat. In Series Two, the visits to *Doctor Who*'s past have been kept to a minimum – so rather than the regular montage sequences of last year, the archive material is largely reserved for coverage of the returning characters such as Sarah Jane and the Cybermen. This is to the programme's advantage really – enjoyable though they were, there were moments last year when it seemed as though the clips montages were there mainly to pad the shows to the timeslot's required length. For Series Two the *Confidential* team clearly accumulated much more behind-the-scenes footage from each episode than they had on Series One, and it was enjoyable to see so much of it presented here. One of the unavoidable problems of *Doctor Who Confidential* is that clips from as-yet-unbroadcast episodes are largely off-limits, and so last year the earlier episodes ended up heavily using extracts from *Rose* and *The End of the World* ad nauseum. The same could have been true this year, but this was neatly sidestepped by devoting a fair bit of time to *The Christmas Invasion*. As the only *Doctor Who* episode of the 'new era' to not have its own full *Confidential* episode (not to mention its importance as David Tennant's first outing as the Doctor) it was pleasing to revisit the festive episode in the *One Year On* special and in several other early *Confidential*s during the regular series.

The list of interviewees was as impressive as last year. As the incoming Doctor, David Tennant showed a real interest in every area of the production, displaying a knowledge that you might not expect of an actor – such as his comments on earlier drafts of Mark Gatiss' script for *The Idiot's Lantern*. It's clear that Tennant's co-star Billie Piper was interviewed very late in the day – her absence from the first five episodes is sadly rather

> "Russell T Davies is such a powerful screen presence, that you can imagine *Confidential* working even if he was the only interviewee."



obvious, particularly on Episode 3, where it would have been nice to have heard the actress' thoughts on Rose's encounter with Sarah Jane. However, when she did appear, Piper's comments were illuminating – particularly her observations that Rose can be quite 'annoying' and 'a little minx' in the way that she treated poor Mickey Smith.

Also noticeable by their non-appearance were writers Tom MacRae and Matt Jones, although head writer Russell T Davies talked in so much detail about their episodes that their presence isn't missed nearly as much as it might have been. Indeed, Davies is such a powerful screen presence, with such an irresistible personality, that you can imagine *Doctor Who Confidential* working even if he were the only person interviewed. Whether or not you agree with some of his decisions as *Doctor Who*'s executive producer, he is an expert in justifying his reasons for every single one, and it is quite clear why he has made *Doctor Who* the BBC's biggest success story of recent years.

For my money the most successful and interesting episode of this series was the fourth, *Script to Screen*, which took us on *The Girl in the Fireplace*'s journey from the first script meeting to its final edit. Here was a chance to spend time looking at very specific elements; the nightmarish challenge of just *how* you go about making a horse leap through a mirror into an eighteenth-century ballroom, for example.

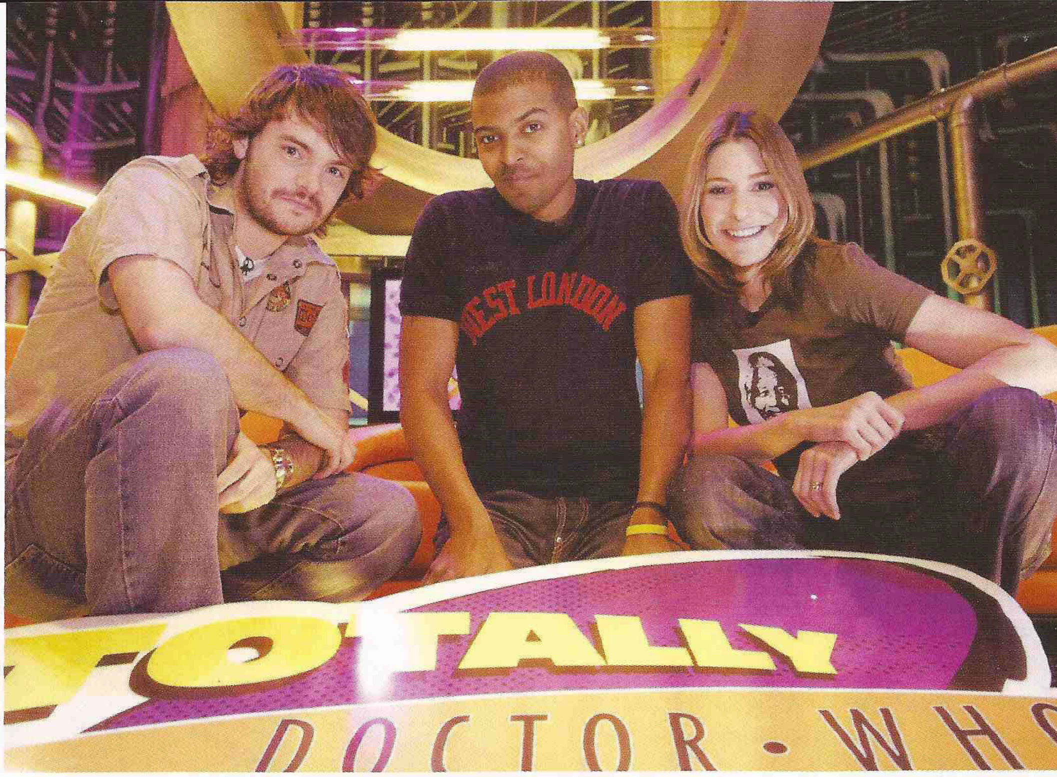
Episode 12 was also worthy of note, with a lengthy section devoted to a sneaky peak at the forthcoming spin-off series *Torchwood*; while Episode 10, *The New World of Who*, took the interesting sidestep of looking at some of the other new media *Doctor Who* projects such as the *Tardisodes* and the official *Doctor Who* website.

Mark Gatiss did a fine job as series narrator, ably taking over from Series One's Simon Pegg, although it seemed that much of the time he was almost surplus to requirements – if only because this year's interviews really didn't seem to *need* an awful lot of linking narration.

Series Two of *Confidential* was a big improvement on the already excellent first series, and if there are any complaints at all, it's that BBC Three rarely repeated the full episodes, instead preferring to show 15-minute 'Cut-down' versions. Unlike the first series, which lost little by being cut down for repeat broadcasts, here it was a shame to lose so much new series material, particularly on an episode like *Script to Screen*, which was designed to tell its story in 30 minutes.

This is a small niggle, however. More of this quality next year please, BBC Three.

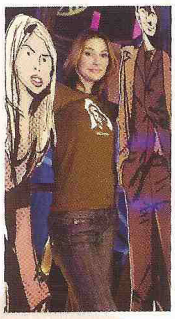
STUART TEMPLAR



The Total mix

TOTALLY DOCTOR WHO

Produced by ROS ATTILLO, SIMON HALL | Broadcast Thursdays 13 April – 6 July 2006



▲ *Top: Barney and Liz with guest Noel Clarke in the studio.*

▲ *Above: Liz with her Rose and Doctor cut-outs.*

TOTALLY DOCTOR WHO WAS AN interesting experiment – and as a kids spin-off from an 'adult' drama, quite unlike anything that has been previously attempted on Children's BBC. Presented by Barney Harwood and Liz Barker from a vaguely *Doctor Who*-themed studio, the programme was split into various sections over each 25 minutes: a behind-the-scenes look at the previous week's episode of *Doctor Who* (using unseen *Confidential* footage); an interview with a studio guest; two young challengers pitting their Doctor Who knowlege against each other to be crowned the 'Who-Ru'; and the 'Companion Academy', where eight young 'cadets' were put through various challenges and tasks in a bid to be found worthy of becoming a companion (and also to win a visit to the *Doctor Who* set), before being voted off one-by-one by a *Pop Idol*-style panel.

Totally Doctor Who was clearly a programme that found its feet as the weeks went on. I'm not eight years old, so I'm probably not the best judge of how successful some of its aspects were – but I would imagine that kids would have been less interested in Barney's exploits in a haunted house, and more interested in finding out about *Doctor Who* monsters! It was unfortunate too, that there seemed to be a distinct lack of studio guests at the start of the run, with David Tennant and Noel Clarke taking it in turns for the first four episodes. As such the early editions felt rather 'empty', and it would have been nice to have had more children actually *in* the studio to put their own questions to the Doctor, rather than just having Harwood and Barker call the shots. This was a lesson well-learned by the end, though, with Russell T Davies interviewed instead by a panel of young would-be writers. By Episode 13 the studio was positively filled with *Doctor Who* guest stars and costumed children, making the whole programme feel a little more like the lively Saturday morning show *Live and Kicking*, and a little less like an old-fashioned *Blue Peter*.

Other successful items were the trip that a group of children took to The Mill's visual effects workshop, and Liz's visit to the This Planet Earth factory to see Daleks being made. It was nice, too, that *Totally* took time to speak to some of the younger guest actors, particularly Abisola Agbaje (Chloe Webber from *Fear Her*), and Jessica Atkins (young Reinette from *The Girl in the Fireplace*), who had been overlooked by *Doctor Who Confidential*.

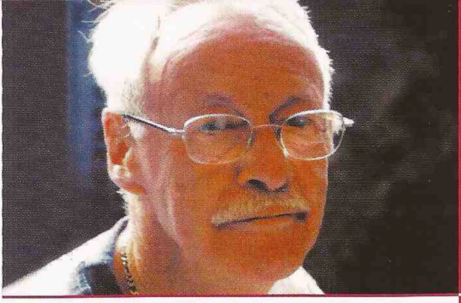
Companion Academy was a fun idea, but could have been executed rather better than it actually was. Unfortunately several of the tasks felt rather slight, and might have been better if themed more rigidly around *Doctor Who* itself. Due to the very short nature of these segments, it was also sometimes unclear sometimes exactly *why* the panel had decided to vote off any given cadet – but then again, perhaps there was a limit to how far the *Totally* team really wanted to go in making small children cry!

It was a great idea to tie-in the edition following broadcast of *The Idiot's Lantern* to look at the history of *Doctor Who* – although it was a shame that children are now under the impression that 'John Pertwee' and 'Peter Davidson' used to play the Doctor.

Overall, though, if *Totally Doctor Who* was an experiment, then it was a largely successful one, and given the improvements in the format over 13 weeks, I'm sure we'll see an even better series next year.

STUART TEMPLAR

▼ *The monster mash from Totally's final programme.*



Ahh! What?! It's the...

MATRIX DATA BANK

– Hmm. Not very impressive, Doctor.

– What? Don't blame me, Romana! It's not my fault if the Randomiser can't land us anywhere more interesting than a room full of bits of paper!

– But where exactly are we?

– Ah...

– You don't know?

– Don't know? Of course I don't not know! In fact I know!

– Well?

– ENVIRONMENT IDENTIFIED AS MATRIX DATA BANK, MASTER.

– Oh shut up, K9. I don't need you to tell me about the Matrix Data Bank!

– Well, Doctor?

– Er... yes, er... well... K9, tell me about the Matrix Data Bank.

– CANNOT COMPLY, MASTER.

– What?!

– IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR ORIGINAL INSTRUCTION – QUOTE "I DON'T NEED YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT THE MATRIX DATA BANK".

– Ah, but you can tell me, can't you K9?

– AFFIRMATIVE, MISTRESS. MATRIX DATA BANK: A REPOSITORY FOR QUERIES CONCERNING THE TELEVISED TRAVELS OF THE DOCTOR MASTER IN **DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE**. CURRENT PROPRIETOR: SORVAD. PREVIOUS PROPRIETORS: ANDREW PIXLEY, DAVID J –

– Oh shut up, K9.

– Well, I suppose it can't do any harm to answer some of these questions while we're here, can it, Doctor?

– If that's your idea of fun, Romana.

– Then what are *you* going to do?

– I don't know, something more interesting... picking the fluff out of my scarf!

– Come along K9, fetch a question.

– MISTRESS.

– Hang on! Why are you answering that shiny new pile of questions, eh? These look far more interesting!

– THEY HAVE BEEN STAMPED "ANSWERED", MASTER.

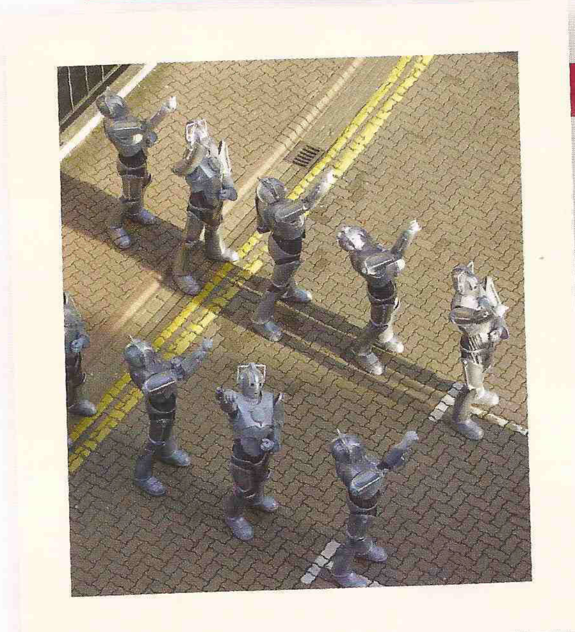
– No question's ever completely answered, K9, you should learn that.

– Cough. They're covered in dust – must be centuries old.

– There's nothing wrong with being covered in dust and centuries old, Romana. Some of the very best things in life are covered in dust and centuries old.

– Like you for example?

– Yes! As a matter of fact, yes! Let's get stuck in!



TERROR OF THE OSMONDS

– Ah. This one's from **WILF ANDREWS** of Clydebank, Scotland, who back in 1981 asked *"Is the Cybermen home planet Telos or Mondas?"* Well, that's easy enough.

– What a paralysingly tedious question! People don't want to know about that.

– Well, Wilf obviously did.

– Never mind Wilf, Romana. I've got far more interesting things to tell the readers of this magazine. Things they didn't even know they didn't know!

– REMINDER MASTER; FUNCTION OF THE MATRIX DATA BANK IS TO REPLY TO READERS' QUERIES.

– You keep your oar out, K9. The name of this publication is **Doctor Who Magazine**. Not "K9 Magazine".

– He's right, Doctor.

– Or "Romana Magazine", thank you. Yes, I'll tell them about... I know! Something really interesting. I bet nobody out there knows that poor old Dudley Simpson, the composer of the series' incidental music for most of the 1970s, had his car vandalised at TV Centre in November 1972!

– And that's interesting, why?

– Well, Romana, he was at TV Centre for a meeting with the director Paul Bernard to discuss the music for *Frontier In Space*. Unfortunately, so were a horde of Osmonds fans, waiting to see their pop idols perform a song on *Top of the Pops*.

– THAT SONG WAS *CRAZY HORSES*, MASTER.

– All right, K9, there's such a thing as too much information, you know. Anyway, yes, old Dudley's car was set upon by the Osmonds fans. It didn't stand a chance. And from that night on, security at TV Centre was stepped up to prevent such a terrible thing ever happening again. There! Nobody knew that! That's what I call an answer!

– TO A QUESTION THAT NOBODY ASKED, MASTER.

– Quite! Let's have another one!

HEY MATTHEW

– AFFIRMATIVE MASTER. THIS PREVIOUSLY ANSWERED QUESTION IS FROM EARTH YEAR 1990. READER **A. TELFER** OF GALLOWAY ASKS *"HOW MANY TIMES HAS THE DOCTOR BEEN KNOWN TO SING IN THE SERIES?"* I SHALL COMMENCE REPLY... ACCESSING DATA BANKS...

– Don't bother, K9. Who wants to know that? I'll tell 'em what they don't know they really want to know...

– Go on then, Doctor.

– Well... ah, yes, of course! I bet many of the readers don't realise that one of the very first letters printed in the letters column of this very magazine – back when it was good and it had my face on the cover every week, and the odd transfer in it – was from none other than a certain Matthew Waterhouse of Haywards Heath, better known as our companion Adric!

– Though of course we haven't met him yet, Doctor.

– Not quite yet, no. Something to look forward to, Romana!

– Oh, I can't wait.

– He hadn't even been cast, he was just another reader and fan of the show. Wouldn't you say, in the scheme of things, that was very peculiar, K9?

– VERY PECULIAR, MASTER.

– Doctor.

– Romana?

– Frankly, I've had enough of your fascinating facts.

– What?

– So I'll answer the next question. A fresh one.

– Hah! I'd like to see you try!

– PROGNOSTICATION THAT THE ACCURACY OF THE MISTRESS' REPLY WILL EXCEED THE ACCURACY OF YOUR ANSWERS, MASTER: 98 PER CENT.

WE NEVER SAW NUFFINK...

– Reader **JAMES HADWEN** writes via email to ask *"In the Doctor Who universe, is there a definitive date for earth's first official contact with aliens? After all, the events of* The Christmas Invasion*, let alone* Doomsday*, suggest that alien contact must have been acknowledged officially?"*

– Go on then, Romana. Answer that one!

– Gladly. I think James has to remember what the Doctor says in 1988's *Remembrance of the Daleks* – that humanity has a kind of collective mass denial about alien contact. He points out that Ace doesn't know about the events of *The Web of Fear*, *Terror of the Zygons*, etc. Even mass invasions of London by the Cybermen in *The Invasion* – which,

YOUR **DOCTOR WHO** QUERIES ANSWERED BY THE FOURTH DOCTOR, ROMANA & K9

despite the controversy over UNIT dating, must have happened before Ace left Earth in 1987 – and the Cyber incursion of 1986 seen in *The Tenth Planet*, aren't a part of her historical memory. Let alone the evacuation of central London in *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*. So I would suggest that acceptance of aliens – first contact, if you like, officially acknowledged in full public view – hasn't yet been seen in the series.

– What kind of an answer's that, Romana?! That Sycorax ship was seen by millions on TV! And there were Cybermen and Daleks slugging it out in the streets of London!

– Denial is a typically human crowd reaction, Doctor. In fact there was a line cut from *Love & Monsters* where Elton explained that the government had explained away the Sycroax ship as a Russian stealth craft.

– Cut lines! Pfft! They don't count.

– Anyway, I'd suggest that rather than the crux point of first contact that James suggests, there's a gradual acceptance of alien life among the human citizenry from the time of the UNIT stories up to the 2010s.

– I'd like to throw something in here, Romana.

– Feel free, Doctor.

– Oh I do, I do. I'd just like to point out to this James Hadwen person that this is one of those questions you're *not supposed to ask!* He'll be wondering why the TARDIS always lands smack in the middle of trouble next!

– I've always wondered that, Doctor–

– *Ssh*, Romana. Just – *ssshhh*. I think this Matrix Data Bank is a very dangerous place. We could open some very contentious cans of worms in here, don't you think, K9?

– QUERY RELEVANCE OF PHYLUM *ANNELIDA* IMMERSED IN TINPLATE STEEL, MASTER?

– Shut up, K9.

– And perhaps if any readers have thoughts on this subject they could send them here to The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Doctor?

– What?! Tunbridge Wells? Did you say the Pantiles? Why are we sat here, let's go and have a drink from the Chalybeate Spring, come on! Lovely shopping in the Royal Victoria Centre for you, Romana... And you can be Disgusted, K9... I was here in 1606 with Lord North, you know... Come on, you two...

Sorvad is blacked out by an ITV strike.

CHRISTMAS STOCKING FILLERS FROM

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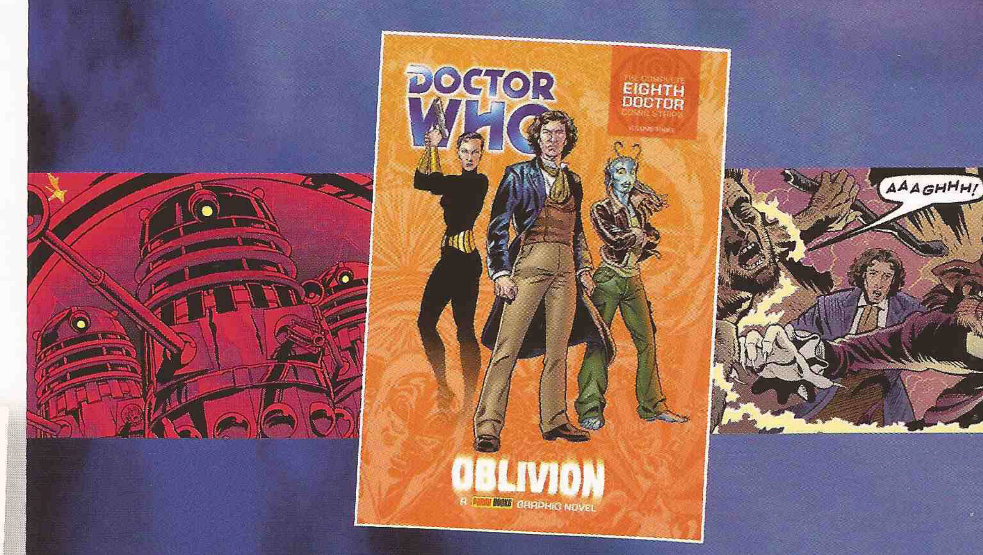
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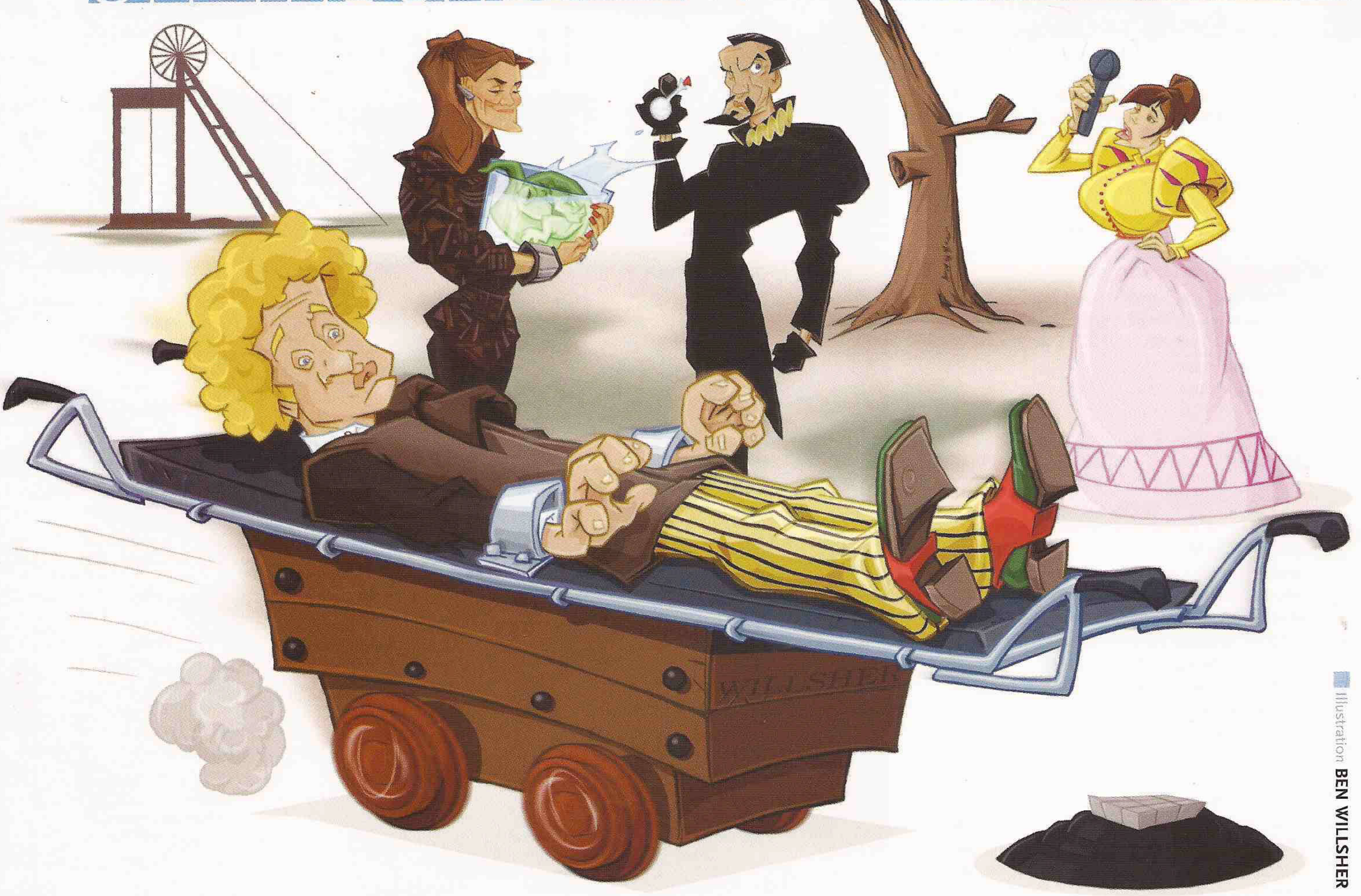
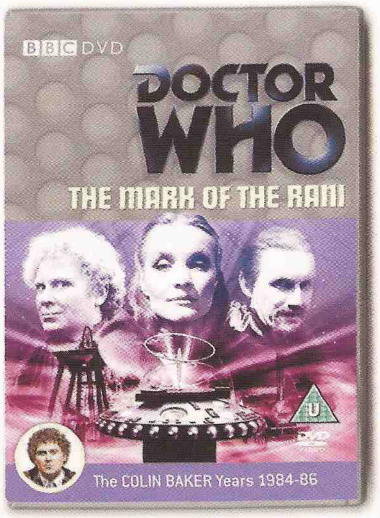


Illustration **BEN WILLSHER**

THE MARK OF THE RANI

DVD 2 | entertain | **BY** Pip and Jane Baker
PRICE £19.99 | **OUT** Now



LIKE THE OLD ADAGE ABOUT MUSICAL theatre – that no-one should come out whistling the scenery – it's probably not a good thing that what most stands out about 1985's *The Mark of the Rani* is its location filming at Ironbridge's Blists Hill Open Air Museum, that doubles for the story's nineteenth-century Northern mining town of Killingworth.

Set against the backdrop of the Industrial Revolution and the Luddite riots, Pip and Jane Baker's story of two renegade Time Lords – old favourite the Master, and new girl on the block the Rani – joining forces to destroy the Doctor promises much but delivers little. Part of the problem is how contrived the whole thing feels. With the whole of time and space to cause trouble in, it's difficult to believe that the Rani and the Master would *both* be skulking around Killingworth for completely different reasons – the Rani to extract brain fluid from the locals to quell the restless inhabitants of her own planet Miasimia Goria, and the Master to disrupt the course of human history. Again.

Another problem is how the script doesn't seem to know where it's going. With both renegades shoehorned in, it becomes clear that neither of their original reasons to be on Earth play a significant part at all. The Rani's supply of brain fluid is only important as a device to enable the Master to blackmail her into helping him kill the Doctor; while the Master's own plan – to upset the Industrial Revolution by controlling its leading inventors to work to his vision – dwindles away to nothing.

Performance-wise, the story scores more highly. Kate O'Mara is well cast as the callous Rani, aiming some cutting put-downs at the Master, annoyed that he's brought his vendetta with the Doctor to her doorstep. As the Master, Anthony Ainley doesn't take his relegation to the story's second villain too badly, and with the notable absence of his usual 'ho-ho' chuckle, seems to be making efforts to underplay the character and make him more sinister. For Colin Baker, the story is the chance to show his usually verbose Doctor as more of a daredevil figure, gamely throwing himself into some well-staged action sequences, such as his fight with a group of Luddites over the mouth of a well, and Part One's cliffhanger where, strapped to one of the Rani's operating trolleys, he's sent hurtling towards a gaping mine-shaft.

In line with *Doctor Who*'s more recent 'celebrity historicals' where the Doctor has crossed paths with the likes of Charles Dickens and Queen Victoria, *The Mark of the Rani* sees the Doctor encounter inventor George Stephenson; sleeves rolled up and well into completing work on his revolutionary steam engine, the as-yet-untitled 'Rocket'. Gawn Grainger plays Stephenson as kind and well-meaning, but caught in a story between three egomaniac Time Lords, he doesn't get much of a chance to shine.

Boisterous performances, however, like nice scenery, can't hide that *The Mark of the Rani* is something of a mess. Part One is the better of the two, if only because the Rani's use of the Luddite riots as cover for her operations still gives the story some relevance to its period setting. Part Two, however, all but throws it out the window. Discovering the Rani's TARDIS, the Doctor sabotages its navigational system and the story is resolved with spurious Time Lord technology. With more thought, the Doctor should have been trying to save Earth from a return to the Dark Ages or stop the

REVIEWERS THIS ISSUE:

Vanessa Bishop (VB)
Matt Michael (MM)
Stuart Templar (ST)

Industrial Revolution's greatest engineers from being brainwashed – or worse, assassinated. Instead he's hiding on board the Rani's TARDIS, tinkering with circuitry and overhearing silly anecdotes about how one of the Rani's experiments once ate the President of Gallifrey's cat.

By the time the Rani and the Master set a trap for the Doctor using chemical landmines that turn people into trees, Pip and Jane's story has moved so far away from its Industrial Revolution-set beginning that not only does it seem like another story altogether, but it might as well have been set on another planet.

DVD EXTRAS

The story's 'Extras' leave little of the production unexplored: two Ironbridge location films – a *Now and Then* revisiting the site, and a geography field-trip style *Blue Peter* report focusing on the area's iron-smelting past – and a number of features on the story's music – composer Jonathan Gibbs on how he arrived at his rich and orchestral score, and John Lewis' unused and unfinished composition, a markedly thinner piece that can be played as an alternative soundtrack to Part One.

Steve Broster's straightforward, 40-minute 'Making of' documentary, *Lords and Luddites*, does a good job of uncovering interesting material about the rest, such as why the story's studio time was cut, the bathhouse set's former appearance as a convent in prisoner-of-war drama *Tenko*, and how the production acquired an extra film crew it didn't even pay for. The inclusion of a previous Baker/O'Mara showdown from 1970s drama *The Brothers* is a nice touch as well. On the down side is Louise Brady's rather piercing narration, and the odd decision to cover *Doctor Who*'s 1985 cancellation that, coming a few weeks after *Mark*'s broadcast, isn't really part of the story at all.

The deleted and extended scenes package doesn't reveal too many painful losses, although the early TARDIS scene with Peri twirling around in her period costume is of note for its echoes of Sarah Jane in *Pyramids of Mars*, and the creepy reveal of two gas-masked figures standing behind a sliding panel in the bathhouse seems an peculiar moment to have cut.

The generous collection of 'Extras' does lead to some repetition – Colin Baker, Nicola Bryant and Kate O'Mara's commentary repeats stories told in the 'Making of', save one or two digressions to draw differences between Ainley's Master and memories of Roger Delgado's portrayal. Likewise, the number of location and music features get a little repetitive at times, but the gloriously silly *Saturday Superstore* clip – where Baker and Bryant take a call from 'The Master' – is a gem.

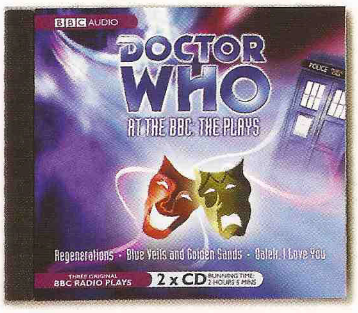
Overall, though, the special features offer good support to a mediocre story. **VB**

DOCTOR WHO AT THE BBC: THE PLAYS

CD BBC Audio | **BY** Daragh Carville/Martyn Wade/Colin Sharpe | **PRICE** £13.99 | **OUT** Now

THE MASKS OF COMEDY AND TRAGEDY make an appropriate cover to these three *Doctor Who*-inspired radio plays – although, considering the overall tone of each piece, perhaps the tragedy mask should've been pictured slightly larger.

Set in Belfast, bang in the middle of the marching season, Daragh Carville's 2001 play *Regenerations* focuses on a group of fans meeting for an annual *Doctor Who* convention, and one jaded, drink-fuelled member who attacks his friends for not living in the real world. The play's own particular brand of bleakness is to contrast the growing fear of a major confrontation outside with the resentment and bitterness of friends growing apart. Written with obvious knowledge of the programme and the convention circuit, at one point, one member points out how very *Doctor Who* the situation is – a small group of people, an isolated community, facing a threat from outside and all the time harbouring a traitor within their midst. Carville addresses some deep-seated fan neuroses about the show – whether it's a children's programme or not, and what might be missing from the lives of its fans that they end up so obsessed by it.


BBC AUDIO
DOCTOR WHO
AT THE BBC: THE PLAYS
Regenerations - Blue Veils and Golden Sands - Dalek, I Love You
THREE ORIGINAL BBC RADIO PLAYS
2 x CD
RUNNING TIME: 2 HOURS 5 MINS

Regenerations is distinguished by cameo appearances from Tom Baker and Sophie Aldred, the latter fending questions on a convention panel and Baker turning up near the end to interrupt a fight between the warring friends. Tom's appearance finally puts a positive spin on things, and the play's accusation that *Doctor Who* is a sad and silly thing is finally laid to rest. Tom's understated performance is a joy to behold, as are the nanoseconds where he appears to be back playing the Doctor again. The play also unfolds with a clever structure that mimics the series' own cliffhangers. Overall, though, with its adult language, *Regenerations* can be tough and uncompromising, and its feel-good ending doesn't linger as long as some of its darker moments.

2002's *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* by Martyn Wade is a dramatised account of original *Doctor Who* theme arranger Delia Derbyshire's days at the BBC Radiophonic Workshop and her later recollections of that time. Endearingly played by Sophie Thompson, the magical few minutes where Delia creates the theme and plays it to its astonished composer Ron Grainer has already been released on a previous CD (*Doctor Who at the BBC: Volume One*). The rest of Wade's play is a journey of Derbyshire's creative highs and lows, from her first view of the Radiophonic Workshop as "paradise" to her later irritation with the department, agitated by a lack of recognition and how her work would often be used inappropriately in other programmes.

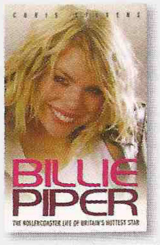
One of the sadnesses of *Blue Veils and Golden Sands* is that when Delia finally received recognition in the early 1990s, mainly from the electronic music scene, she was an impoverished recluse who was drinking herself to death. Another is that by the time she was inspired enough to return to her work, she was too ill to do anything about it. All told, this is a moving and sensitively handled production.

Colin Sharpe's 2006 play *Dalek I Love You* focuses on obsessive *Doctor Who* fan Nigel – who mistakenly believes his father is Third Doctor actor Jon Pertwee – and a mysterious girl he meets at a convention. This is an odd and often surreal story, and it is never made entirely clear whether the girl is a figment of Nigel's imagination or even an alien, nor why, when invited to stay at Nigel's house, she's determined to cause so much trouble, verbally attacking his mother and prompting a confession of an affair, not with Pertwee, but with a *Doctor Who* bit-part actor. Ultimately, whatever point Sharpe is trying to make is lost in the confusion and the play ends on a bitter and inconclusive note.

A thought-provoking collection, then, though not one with many smiles. **VB**

> "One of the sadnesses is that when Delia finally received recognition, she was an impoverished recluse..."

SHELF BRACKETS

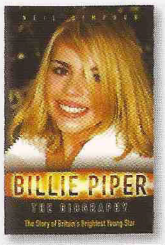


BILLIE PIPER

BOOK Michael O'Mara Books **BY** Chris Stevenss | **PRICE** £6.99 **OUT** Now

Ahead of Billie Piper's own autobiography, which the actress has promised for some time next year, comes a couple of quick cash-in unofficial publications. First out of the blocks is this volume from Chris Stevens. Titled simply *Billie Piper*, the book promises to tell the story of 'the rollercoaster life of Britain's hottest star'. This it does in a straightforward-enough sort-of way, using quotes from old interviews, press releases and stories from tabloid newspapers.

At only 24 years old, Billie has had quite a remarkable career, first hitting the big time with her pop hit *Because We Want To* almost a decade ago. With her singing career and her high-profile marriage to Chris Evans taking up hefty sections of the book, her role in *Doctor Who* is afforded the final quarter, but there is unlikely to be all that much to interest those who already have even a passing knowledge of Piper's career. **ST**

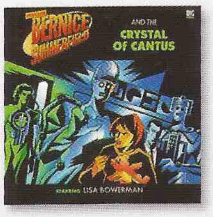


BILLIE PIPER: THE BIOGRAPHY

BOOK John Blake Ltd | **BY** Neil Simpson | **PRICE** £6.99 | **OUT** Now

Biography number two is this larger volume from Neil Simpson. Covering exactly the same material as Stevens' book, Simpson does so in slightly more depth, although he too mainly uses old magazine articles and interviews as his main tool of reference. Like Stevens, Simpson uses *Doctor Who* as the initial starting point for his book, before going back in time to Piper's childhood in Chapter 2. It's interesting that even the book's logo has been designed to echo *Doctor Who*'s own branding, suggesting that Billie is now better known as Rose Tyler, than as a pop star or as Chris Evans' ex-wife.

Of the two, this is the better reseaarched and more extensive volume, but one suspects that Piper's own autobiography will render these books redundant. **ST**



PROFESSOR BERNICE SUMMERFIELD & THE CRYSTAL OF CANTUS

AUDIO Big Finish | **BY** Joseph Lidster | **PRICE** £10.99 | **OUT** Now

When Jason Kane and Irving Braxiatel embark on a trip to catch a Galliari production of Macbeth, Professor Bernice Summerfield is naturally suspicious. Not only are the pair unlikely companions, but while Brax is a lover of culture, her ex-husband most definitely is not. Sneaking aboard their ship, she soon discovers that they're bound for the planet Cantus, the real purpose of the journey – it initially appears – to search for a legendary crystal following a tip-off from an old friend. If Cantus looks bleak, things get much worse when the party encounters some entombed Cybermen waking from a century-long sleep.

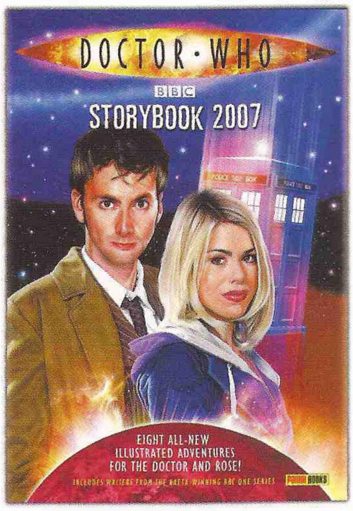
Aside from the Cybermen, Lidster's play is most notable for its fragmented storytelling style, and for the dramatic developments in the lives of its main characters. The story – told in retrospect to one of Benny's students – has Benny and Brax each giving separate accounts, Benny's telling being guarded and prickly, showing how affected she's been by the experience, whilst Brax's is more sinister and selective. However, as the story flicks back and forth, splicing the two versions together, the flow is inevitably interrupted. There are occasions when this fractured approach works very effectively – the opening, for example, with Brax, Benny and Jason telling a potted version of the story we're about to hear, that has their voices virtually overlapping. For much of the time, though, it makes the narrative rather difficult to follow.

Lidster's script successfully creates an unsettling mood, with Benny's gradual realisation that Brax has had a major hand in the whole affair. Miles Richardson, as Brax, is as smoothly menacing as ever, and in keeping with the darker tone, Lidster's view of where Cybermats come from is perhaps the most genuinely horrific idea in Cyber-history.

With Jason still suffering the effects of his Cyber-conversion, Brax vanished into thin air and the Braxiatel Collection in chaos, *The Crystal of Cantus* ends on a great deal of uncertainty and demanding answers... **VB**

STORYBOOK 2007

BOOK Panini Books | **BY** Various authors
PRICE £7.99 | **OUT** Now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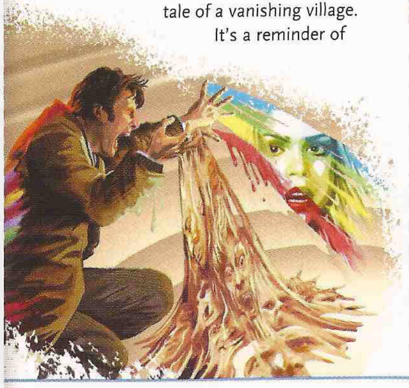
EIGHT ALL-NEW ILLUSTRATED ADVENTURES FOR THE DOCTOR AND ROSE!
INCLUDES WRITERS FROM THE BAFTA-WINNING BBC ONE SERIES
PANINI BOOKS

THE STORYBOOK'S FORMAT IS essentially that of an old style *Doctor Who Annual*, without the crosswords and science-based space-fillers, and like last year's Panini-produced 2006 *Annual*, features authors to have written for the television series. The *Storybook*'s vivid cover painting of a doe-eyed Doctor and Rose looks to be aimed at a young audience, although that impression isn't necessarily backed up by some of the stories' themes.

Opening with *A letter from the Doctor*, a light-hearted note as dictated to Russell T Davies, Mark Gatiss kicks the stories off with the 1975-set *Cuckoo-Spit*, a tale about bodysnatching aliens told through the diary extracts of a schoolboy. Gatiss' story is really about the wide-eyed wonder of watching the Doctor's adventures as a child, even if, in this case, the story's schoolboy is lucky enough to take part in one. If that isn't nostalgic enough, the piece positively bulges with 1970s pop culture.

Nicholas Briggs' *No One Died* takes the Doctor and Rose back even further, to 1962, for an eerie John Wyndham-esque tale of a vanishing village. It's a reminder of the quaint, countrified, old-style story that BBC Wales has yet to rediscover, and Briggs makes an entertaining job of demonstrating how this type of adventure still works.



There's something of a retro feel, too, about Justin Richards' *Night of the Living Dead*-ish *Gravestone House*, about a faulty space probe that mistakenly triggers an evolution program in an old cemetery. Perhaps a bit predictable in parts, Richards' tale is lifted by some good dialogue between the Doctor and Rose. For characterisation, though, Robert Shearman's *Untitled* – involving an art gallery where the paint is alive – probably captures the Tenth Doctor and Rose best, the quicksilver mind of Tennant's Doctor demonstrated in dialogue where he barely stops to draw breath. Weird, and when Rose discovers a portrait of her screaming self, rather unsettling, this is the highlight of the collection, and strikingly illustrated by Brian Williamson.

Shearman's tale is just the sort of odd and disturbing story you wouldn't expect to be hiding behind the book's bright cover, and another is Steven Moffat's downbeat *Corner of the Eye*, a disconcerting tale of paranoia, agoraphobia and murder told, unusually, in internet 'instant messaging' posts between a husband and wife – the culprit of the piece given the inappropriately comic name of 'Floof'.

Tom MacRae's *Once Upon a Time* takes the style of a mediaeval mystery, set in a village whose children are disappearing. One of two stories that see the Doctor travelling alone, MacRae's tale refers to him as 'the Wizard', a move that feels appropriate given the story's fairytale setting. Jonathan Morris' alien take on Venice lends itself beautifully to the rich imagery of comic-strip *Opera of Doom*, a lively story of an automated orchestra that is powered by draining music from the minds of the Vanezians.

In *The Cat Came Back*, Gareth Roberts creates an imaginatively different villainess in Mitzi, the first cat in hyperspace, now possessed by an alien intelligence. There's a nice *Planet of the Apes*-style philosophy about Mitzi's plan to return to Earth and lead an uprising against the humans that makes her actual fate – as a stray yet to be adopted by Rose and Jackie – an unexpectedly gentle twist.

All in all, the *Doctor Who Storybook* is a good read that well reflects the invention and different story styles of the series today. It also probably stands unique in such collections for not having a single true dud or one piece that outstays its welcome. **VB**

> "The vivid cover looks to be aimed at a young audience, but that isn't backed up by some of the stories' themes."

THE OFFICIAL ANNUAL 2007

BOOK BBC Children's Books/Penguin
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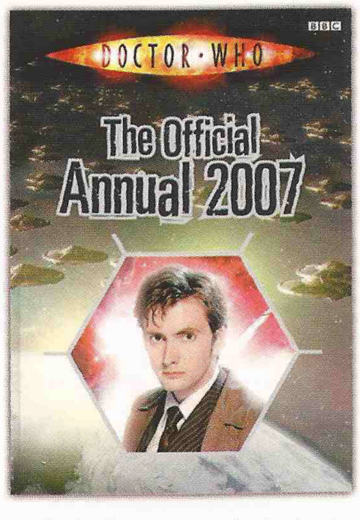


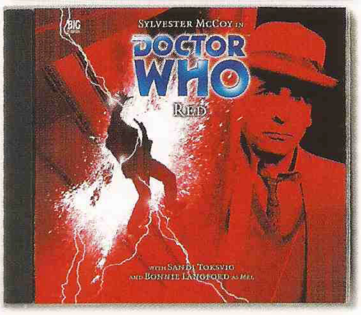
IT'S DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHERE TO pitch a review of this year's *Annual*. Compared to World Distributors' original run (from 1965-1986) and Panini's revival of the format last year, it's by far the worst. Then again, produced by BBC Children's Books and – as with the rest of their *Doctor Who* output – aimed squarely at the 7-12 age group, all of their other, similarly themed, activity books have apparently performed very well, thank you very much. Even so, I suspect even the most undemanding of young fans will be disappointed by this *Annual*'s near endless stream of puzzles, quizzes and games – an *Is your teacher an alien?* feature, a Solar System quiz and a *Tooth and Claw* version of Snakes and Ladders, with Wolf-tails and Mistletoe, being just a few of the distractions on offer. True, the *Annual*'s pages are plastered in BBC photos in a way no previous *Annual* has ever seen before, but that hardly compensates for the chronic lack of genuine content.

Fiction is reduced to two comic-strips, one having already been published in *Doctor Who Adventures*. Aside from the introduction to the Doctor and his friends (Rose, Mickey, Sarah Jane, even Reinette, but oddly no Captain Jack), the only feature to speak of is a look at the events leading up to Rose's departure in *Doomsday*. The best thing about the *Annual* is its holographic cover which, depending on the angle you look at it, shows both David Tennant's features and Christopher Eccleston's. Oh, the thrill of tilting the book in your hand and creating your own regeneration...but even this fun innovation seems odd and misplaced, as Eccleston's Ninth Doctor has very little profile in the rest of the book.

Overall, it's hard to imagine that this *Annual* will be as prized and treasured by today's young fans as its predecessors were by theirs. Working out which companion's character most fits you, or finding the hidden words in a letter Rose has written to her Mum, may kill ten minutes on a dull afternoon, but it's nothing you're likely to want to return to, and read and appreciate again. What was perfectly acceptable as a disposable fun book seems wholly cheap and lazy as an *Annual*. Last year we had stories and Russell T Davies writing about the Time War; this time we've advice on how to make your friends believe you're a Time Lord, and how to hold a *Doctor Who*-themed sleepover. *Doctor Who* and its young audience deserve better. **VB**

RED

AUDIO DRAMA Big Finish | **BY** Stewart Sheargold | **PRICE** £13.99 | **OUT** Now



WHEN THE SEVENTH DOCTOR AND MEL are forced to land in the Needle they encounter a society that is regulated and controlled by a computer, Whitenoise, which edits the memories of its charges to ensure that they never have to live with the experience of committing or suffering violent acts. However, Whitenoise's grip is failing: more inhabitants are 'redlining', perpetrating murderous crimes against their neighbours and families. Before long, the Doctor is a suspect, Mel has fallen in – literally – with the outcasts from the Needle's sterile society, and both are under threat from the Red force.

Writer Stewart Sheargold presents us with a society that has been stripped of all violence, the opposite extreme to the video nasty culture of *Vengeance on Varos*. The Doctor calls the Needle's people 'depraved on account of being deprived', irresistibly drawn to hostile acts because they have never been allowed to experience them, to understand the consequences of aggression. It's this concept that drives *Red*, linking all the characters in some way, and resulting in an unusually direct audio play.

At times, *Red* takes too long to get to the point, circling and underlining the same observations on individual choices and responsibilities over and over, as though Sheargold is afraid that we might miss the theme. It's also true that at times the characters have a tendency to talk in the kind of earnest, unnaturally declamatory dialogue you'd expect from a 1950s kitchen sink drama. That's not actually a bad thing, though – it gives *Red* a stylistic quirk that sets it apart from Big Finish's other audios. The effect of this is a play that can come across like a futuristic clash of the classes, with the decadent inhabitants of the needle living a cloistered life without having to worry about the consequences of their actions, while those excluded from this society condemn the depraved without being able to offer any solutions of their own.

Then, in its third episode, *Red* moves in another direction, becoming a detective story as the Doctor and his allies within the Needle act to hunt down the killer. It's a smart move by Sheargold, one that allows him to build on the intrigue of the first two episodes without having to show his hand too soon. Sylvester McCoy is at his best here, working with Kellie Ryan's tormented Celia and Sandi Toksvig's deliciously decadent Vi Yulquen, a sadomasochist because she never has to live with the consequences of the pain she inflicts, to expose their murderous enemy. Where McCoy is less impressive is in the cliffhangers that feature him maniacally rolling his R's as he's possessed by the Red force. Presumably, the effect isn't meant to be so comical.

> "The characters tend to talk in the kind of earnest dialogue you'd expect from a 1950s kitchen sink drama."

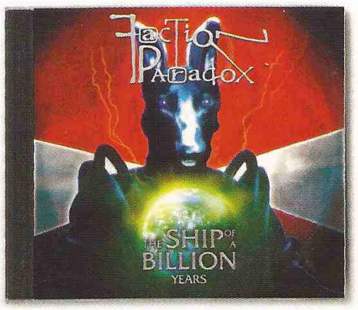
Only in the twisty final episode does *Red* disappoint: a couple of bland, sci-fi pulp revelations lead into an overly busy climax that throws in too much, losing the stark clarity of the previous episodes. Even so, *Red*'s faults can be forgiven because they're outweighed by its positives – a strong, reflective storyline, good characterisation and decent performances from the cast. MM

FACTION PARADOX: THE SHIP OF A BILLION YEARS

AUDIO PLAY Magic Bullet | **BY** Lawrence Miles | **PRICE** £10.99 | **OUT** Now

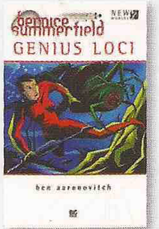
LAWRENCE MILES' FACTION PARADOX/ Sutekh story *The Ship of a Billion Years* picks up where previous audio play *Coming to Dust* left off. Faction member Cousin Justine, imprisoned on a billion year cruise across the universe, has been enslaved by powerful deity Lord Upuat and is being introduced to the Machiavellian politics of the Osirian Court. Meanwhile, in Naples 1763, Cousin Eliza is a guest in the house of adventurer Corwyn Marne. Her purpose – together with Marne and his colleagues – is to find Justine with help from the exotic Merytra, owner of the Sarcophagus time-tunnel through which Justine has travelled 12 hours previously.

Whereas *Coming to Dust* largely concerned itself with the exploits of Marne and his friends, this sequel concentrates more on Upuat, Sutekh, and the crisis brewing aboard the ship over Osiris' disappearance and Sutekh's attempts to snatch his Throne-world. Steeped in myth and legend, Miles' script is grand and epic, and soaked in the kind of overripe dialogue that only warring deities can get away with. Alistair Lock's operatic musical crescendos contributes a lot to the scale, capturing a real sense of power and divinity, from the tumultuous roaring winds signalling the arrival of Sutekh to the angelic heavenly chorus celebrating the Sun God, Ra.



Performance-wise, Gabriel Woolf, who reprises his best-remembered *Doctor Who* role of Sutekh, and Julian Glover as the aristocratic Upuat, steal the show. Woolf's velvet-voiced evil bristles with chilling superiority, particularly during his nightmarish penetration of Eliza's mind in the time-tunnel, accompanied by some agonisingly shrill 'drill' sound-effects. Glover, meanwhile, strolls through the production dishing out blasé observations and impertinent put-downs in a manner not too dissimilar from his *City of Death* character Count Scarlioni and remains permanently unruffled, responding to Sutekh's "Submit or be destroyed" with "I'm not keen on either, to be honest."

True to the tradition of *Faction Paradox* audios, *The Ship of a Billion Years* is tense, dark and sinister, embroiled in magic and necromancy, and has a dense plot that requires the listener's full attention at all times. This instalment doesn't finish so open-ended as the last, but it's encouraging to know that Sutekh is alive and well out there and thus available for further confrontations. VB



BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: GENIUS LOCI

NOVELLA Big Finish
BY Ben Aaronovitch
PRICE £14.99 | **OUT** Now

When 21-year-old Bernice Summerfield arrives on the backwater planet of Jaiwan, she's hoping for her big break, and after bluffing her way into a job as Assistant Field Director on a local dig, is taken under the wing of its leader, the feisty, hard-drinking Professor Mariela Ankola. Following the discovery of a giant frog skull and the death of her mentor, Benny is forced into taking responsibility for the project.

Ben Aaronovitch's novella is fast-moving and – in its depiction of Jaiwan – colourful. Archaeology plot aside, however, it's most fascinating as a 'rites of passage' for the young Benny. Portrayed here more vulnerable, less outrageous, and even 'picky' over men, it's clear she views Professor Ankola as a role model – and the Professor is undoubtedly the template for the thirtysomething version we're more used to, providing the outspokenness, the bravado and even the diary that will later define Benny's character.

Ending, rather fittingly, with Benny's first diary entries, *Genius Loci* offers an enjoyable peek into the character's early life. VB

TOP TRUMPS

CARD GAME Winning Moves Ltd
PRICE £3.99 | **OUT** Now

For younger **DWM** readers the concept of 'Top Trumps' may seem rather quaint, but back the 1970s and 1980s, this card game was played in school playgrounds up and down the country. This new 32-card *Doctor Who*-themed set retains the same concept – two players face-off strategically selecting categories from their card that they believe will beat whatever card their opponent is holding. So the Face of Boe can now take on the Gelth at last! It's all great fun, and the cards well-designed, and word has reached us that a new 'classic' *Doctor Who* set may also be on the way soon... ST

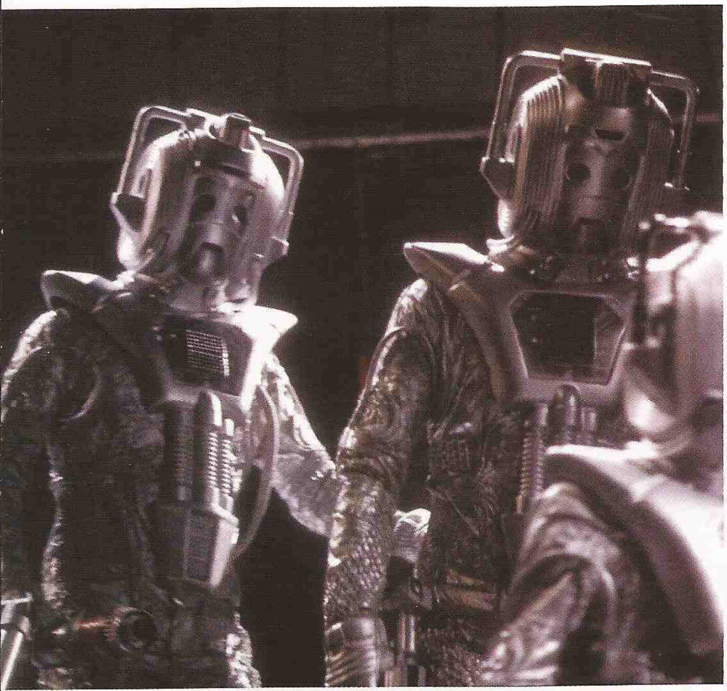
THE REAPING

AUDIO DRAMA Big Finish | **BY** Joseph Lidster
PRICE £14.99 | **OUT** Now

Below: The Cybermen return to menace the Sixth Doctor and Peri in ***The Reaping.***

Bottom: More trouble for Leela on Gallifrey...

EARTH, 1984. THE DOCTOR HAS returned Peri to her home in Baltimore after his companion learns of the murder of her best friend's father. While Peri is awkwardly reunited with her mother, the Doctor can't help but dig into the killing. Soon, he's uncovered more than he'd bargained for. The Cybermen have returned, apparently converting the dead into a new army set to conquer the world...



COLIN BAKER in
DOCTOR WHO
THE REAPING
WITH CLAUDIA CHRISTIAN
AND NICOLA BRYANT AS PERI

It's been a long time since the last regular Sixth Doctor and Peri Big Finish – not since 2002's *...Ish* to be precise – and writer Joseph Lidster makes the most of the pairing. Though they spend much of the play apart, the author tries hard to suggest that there's more to their bickering relationship than meets the eye. For the most part, he succeeds, although at times the play can feel like an apology for the worst excesses of the Colin Baker years. Lidster gives us a Peri who argues most with the people she's closest to, including her mother, played with a convincing mix of guts and consternation by *Babylon 5*'s Claudia Christian. Meanwhile, his Sixth Doctor is bullish without being bullying, inveigling his way into a police station and outsmarting the Cyber-controlled police force armed only with a cup of coffee.

> "Where the TV series' impact is strongest is in the domestic approach that Joseph Lidster takes to his story."

The Reaping is Big Finish's first attempt at the Cybermen since their dramatic return to television earlier in the year, and it's easy to spot the influences the TV series has had on this audio. For a start, the Cybermen remain behind the scenes much of the time, preferring to exercise their control through earpieces implanted in their human victims. Then there's the heavy emphasis on stolen Time Lord technology, and the horrors of Cyber-conversion, plus an irresistible message 'from beyond the grave' that's certain to provoke a few chortles. Where the TV series' impact is strongest, though, is in the domestic approach Lidster takes to his story. Not only does he return Peri to her mother many months after Peri disappeared in Lanzarote, but he brings the Cyberman threat directly into the household of Kathy and Nate Chambers. We're made to empathise more with their father, Anthony Chamber's fate at the hands of the Cybermen than we have been for any previous subject of conversion.

While the leads are well treated, Lidster also gives us a couple of engaging supporting characters. Mrs Van Gysegham comes across like Jessica Fletcher – a nosy woman with an opinion about everything, including the real killer of Anthony Chambers. She certainly doesn't agree that it was the main suspect, Daniel Woods. Both Woods and Van Gysegham are widowed, linking into Lidster's themes of moving on with life after being bereaved.

Perhaps *The Reaping*'s only flaw is that Lidster takes a lot longer to tell the story than he needed to. The resulting audio play has plenty of fine character moments, but could easily have cut to the chase without sacrificing its heart. That aside, though, this is another strong play from Big Finish, and a powerful lead-in to the second part of this duology, *The Gathering*. MM

GALLIFREY: MINDBOMB

AUDIO DRAMA Big Finish | **BY** Justin Richards
PRICE £10.99 | **OUT** Now

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF GALLIFREY continues in this 13th instalment of Big Finish's spin-off series, a battle between rival Time Lords for the Presidency that threatens to disrupt the fragile peace and plunge the planet back into crisis.

After a disastrous beginning in which writer Justin Richards mires himself and the listener in reams of made-up minutiae about Gallifreyan laws, *Mindbomb* develops in a pretty entertaining if predictable and unspectacular manner. In comparison to the high camp confrontations between the leading ladies of the previous plays, this is a lot more serious-minded. While K9 and Leela act as counsels to an incarcerated Romana, Inquisitor Darkel continues to plot her path to power and dark horse Cardinal Matthias conducts clandestine meetings in the catacombs beneath the Capitol.

Using the trappings of American Presidential elections, including stage-managed debates and exit polls, Richards also draws on the iconography of the 1976 television story *The Deadly Assassin*, having one of the candidates fall victim to a lone gunman. That this is just a small part of a larger and far more devious plan should come as no surprise to followers of these plays, who by now expect Watergate-style shenanigans as a given.

Richards has clearly immersed himself in the invented culture of Gallifrey. References back to the chaos that followed the collapse of the Morbius administration (referencing 1976's *The Brain of Morbius*), and innovations during the presidency of Flavia (1983's *The Five Doctors*) add the sheen of verisimilitude to a story that is more than usually reliant on the audience paying close attention to the detail of Time Lord politics. That said, the climax turns on the return of a long-absent character that pushes the series in a different if not entirely unexpected direction, and ends the play on a solid cliffhanger.

As usual, the cast, with the exception of a couple of terribly flat performances, sound like they're having fun with the material. In particular, Lynda Bellingham's Darkel alone is worth the price of admission, snarling her way through the play in classic *Bad Girls* style.

Though lacking some of the outrageous melodrama that's made the *Gallifrey* plays such fun, *Mindbomb* twists and turns through its labyrinthine plot in an entertainingly convoluted manner, moving us towards the series finale with much panache. MM

> "In comparison to the high camp confrontations of the previous plays, this is much more serious-minded."

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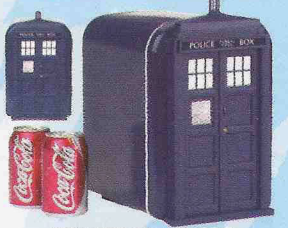

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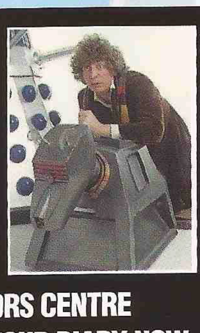

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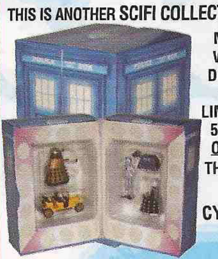

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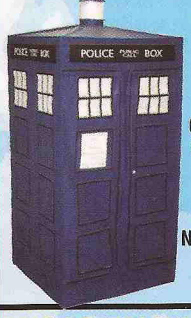

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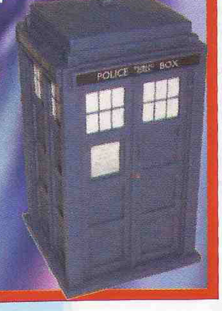

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PRODUCTION NOTES

THIS ISSUE WITH SERIES 3 WRITER **GARETH ROBERTS!**

Illustration BEN MORRIS

ONE YEAR ON...

THE BOSS MAN IS BUSY

Normally he spends his time reclining on a divan in his luxury Cardiff apartment watching his favourite episode of *Doctor Who* (*Arc of Infinity* Part Three, true believer) over and over again while nubile young things pop peeled grapes into his gob, but this month he's actually got to do some work, so Old Roberts, writer of *Attack of the Graske*, Series Three Episode 2 (current title; *The Shakespeare of Evil* – not really), and co-writer of *The Sarah Jane Adventures* Special, is stepping in.

It's about a year since I started working on TV's *Doctor Who*, and here are the best bits.

1 OCTOBER 2005: I'm waiting outside a meeting room at the old Newport Studios for a production get-together on *Attack of the Graske*. (It's my first time on set so I've wandered past a scene from *Tooth and Claw* and yes, of course I played with the TARDIS. 'Look, the bell actually rings!' I cry. 'Yes, it does,' sighs Simon Winstone.) There's a strange wheezing groaning sound coming from the meeting room; the hooting of a Welsh Father Christmas and a dirty Northern cackle in perfect unison. Russell and Phil, who I haven't seen together for about eight years – when we were all at Granada working on *Springhill*, the everyday story of the final climactic battle for the earth between God and the Devil on a Liverpool housing estate. (Written by Russell, Paul Abbott, Frank Cottrell Boyce, Jan McVerry – enough awards between that bunch to sink the *Hyperion III* – and so naturally scheduled by Channel 4 at *three o'clock in the morning!*)

2 SHORTLY AFTER: The *Graske* get-together takes place after the tone meeting for Graeme Harper's episodes of Series Two. I haven't read those scripts – especially not for Episodes 12 and 13, *nobody's* read those. There are storyboards on the wall of two Mickeys, Canary Wharf, lots of Zeppelins, lots of Cybermen. And on the table in the middle there are tons of toy Daleks. I pick one up to have a look, and wonder why everybody in the room is suddenly looking at me oddly and suspiciously. I guess I must just look odd and suspicious; it has been commented on before. Months later, when I get to read the script for *Doomsday*, it clicks that I stumbled upon the biggest spoiler in the history of *Doctor Who* and didn't even notice. This process is apparently called 'putting two and two together'.

"I STUMBLED UPON THE BIGGEST SPOILER EVER AND DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE!"

3 FEBRUARY 2006: Phone call with Simon about the Tardisode for *The Idiot's Lantern*. Can I change OLD LADY to GRAN and add an extra speech at the end. 'Oh yeah,' he adds casually at the end of this conversation, 'you're writing an episode of *Doctor Who* for Series Three.' And my soul flips over like a tiddlywink.

4 MARCH 2006: Russell e-mails me with one word – Shakespeare. And I punch the air. I get to write about my two favourite things! My spies tell me of internet rumblings about why the show doesn't visit more obscure historical eras and characters. Here is the answer. 'This week, the Doctor and Martha meet Wilhelm Grav Slavata and discover aliens plotting to stop the Defenestration of Prague.' Excited?

5 APRIL 2006: A barrage of script meetings with Russell, Julie and Simon. Over lunch, as I burn another hole in my shirt and untangle crumbs of cheese from my beard, I tell them that on certain shows I've worked on in the past *I* was the most disciplined and organised person in the entire production. Three pairs of horrified eyes stare back.

6 JUNE 2006: The nation is hooked – sort of – on *Big Brother 7*. Russell texts to tell me they're re-editing the next episode of *Doctor Who*. 'It's not going to be Satan chained up down that Pit any longer. It's going to be Grace.'

7 AUGUST 2006: Off to the Globe Theatre for the first of three nights' filming. Dean Lennox Kelly *exactly* brilliant as Shakespeare. And Freema's in a similar position to me; neither of us can quite believe it all. David Tennant – ridiculously sprightly at 4am – is watching a monitor as the scenes come together. Director Charles Palmer has done something very, very clever which I can't tell you about. 'God, that looks amazing!' cries David, and he's right.

8 ALSO AUGUST: I'm reading the script for Episode 3 of Series Three. It's fiendishly clever, very moving and something rather marvellous and totally unexpected happens on page 37. At which point I drop my chips.

9 SEPTEMBER 2006: The read through for *The Sarah Jane Adventures* Special. I'm going to keep up the honourable traditions of this column by telling you the script contains the words 'blunt', 'muffin' and 'Artron'. It's plain bizarre hearing Lis Sladen's unique symphony of a voice speaking lines I've provided; though of course I have written for the character of Sarah Jane before, filling up school exercise books in the mid-1970s with tales of her adventures alongside the Doctor as they battled such hideous alien menaces as the Mantelli, the Quol and, er, the Fen-men.

10 THE NEXT DAY: we have our first proper meeting to discuss the Sarah Jane series. We're all determined that this will be a big, full-blooded drama; that nobody should ever think of it as 'just' a children's programme. The characters and stories start coming to life; new monsters are born, some familiar monsters are reborn; Sarah Jane, Maria, Luke and Kelsey have their destinies mapped out on a white board. And somehow, from somewhere, the series has already got its own identity and energy. I'm the least confident person in the world – but even I'm certain that what we're coming up with today is so *right*.

So there are the edited highlights. I'm going to sign off with an outrageous lie, a big fib. Not a bluff, not a double bluff, but a total fabrication of utter insanity. People seem to like to skim-read this page and repeat what they think they've read (especially the papers), so let's see how far this one goes: *Solicitor Grey from The Highlanders is coming back!*

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THE TV MOVIE
10th Anniversary
Cast Reunion

nicholas courtney

ian fairbairn

peter halliday

ronny jhutti

alan ruscoe

paul mcgann

daphne ashbrook

sylvester mccoy

lisa bowerman

With **PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE** and **ERIC SAWARD**, with guest interviewers **CLAYTON HICKMAN** and **GARY RUSSELL**! Plus The Invasion Cast Reunion and DVD Signing, Guest Panels, Photo Studio, Autographs, Dealers' Room, Celebrity Dinner and Actor's Coffee Lounge. Don't forget there is also FREE Evening Entertainment provided by **THE OFF STAGE THEATRE GROUP**, Late Night Cabaret featuring **SIOBHAN** and stand up comedy with **CHARLIE ROSS** plus **TOBY HADOKE** performing his solo show ***MOTHS ATE MY DOCTOR WHO SCARF!***

Adult Weekend Pass: £65.00 • **Adult Daily Pass**: £35.00 • **Child Weekend Pass**: £40.00
Child Daily Pass: £20.00 (Ages 11 to 16) • **Student/DWAS Weekend Pass**: £50.00
Saturday Evening Celebrity Dinner: £52.50 • **DWM Saver's Ticket £110.00**: A full weekend pass plus access to two Coffee Lounge Sessions of your choice and the Celebrity Dinner.
That is a 20% saving off the Regular Price of £137.50 just for DWM readers!

Credit Card: 020 8591 5357 or **Secure Online Booking** at www.tenthplanet.co.uk/dimensions
or Send **Cheques/Postal Orders** made payable to **10th Planet Events Ltd** to
10th Planet, 37a Vicarage Field Shopping Centre, Ripple Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 8DQ

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